NINTENDO POWER®

Super Mario 3D Land • The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword • Kirby's Return to Dream Land • Rayman Origins • Pokémon Rumble Blast • WWE '12 • Shinobi

272
OCTOBER 2011
SUBSCRIBER EDITION

"GENTLEMEN,
START YOUR
ARMCHAIRS."
XBOX 360
Wii
JIMMIE JOHNSON'S
Anything With An Engine
IN STORES
OCT 25TH
EVERYONE 10+
KONAMI
Online Interactions
Not Rated by the ESRB

EVERYONE 10+
E 10+
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Alcohol Reference
Crude Humor
Language
Mild Suggestive Themes
Mild Violence

XBOX 360 XBOX LIVE Wii AUTUMN GAMES Isopod labs KONAMI

©2011 Autumn Games LLC. The trademark Jimmie Johnson's Anything With An Engine is property of Jimmie Johnson. KONAMI is a registered trademark of KONAMI CORPORATION. The trademark Autumn Games is a trademark of Autumn Games LLC. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox 360, Xbox LIVE, and the Xbox logos are trademarks of the Microsoft group of companies and are used under the license from Microsoft. Wii is a trademark of Nintendo. © 2006 Nintendo. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks are owned by their respective owners.

RACE ANYTHING

Hi-Speed Kart Racing

Radical Characters

Multi-Player Mode

www.JIMMIEJOHNSONRACINGGAME.com Check out The Race Anything App iOS

NINTENDO POWER

CONTENTS • OCTOBER 2011

Keys to the Kingdom 48

It's the Nintendo 3DS game that everybody's been waiting for: Super Mario 3D Land! We've got exclusive screens and tons of details you won't want to miss!

Reaching for the Sky 58

The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword for Wii could be Link's greatest adventure yet. Here are 19 new reasons why.

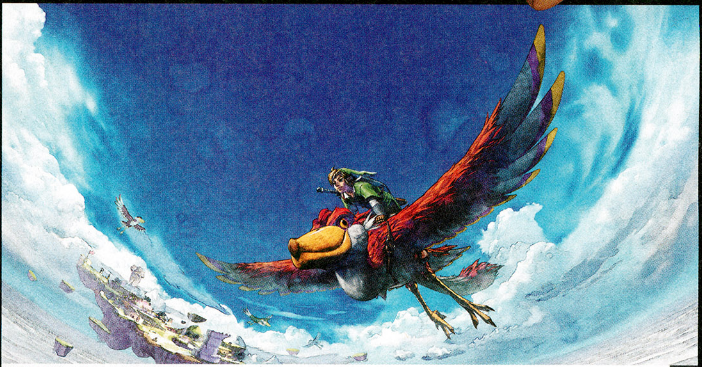
Ready to Rumble 64

Wind up your Toy Pokémon for an all-new action-packed brawl as Pokémon Rumble Blast comes to Nintendo 3DS.

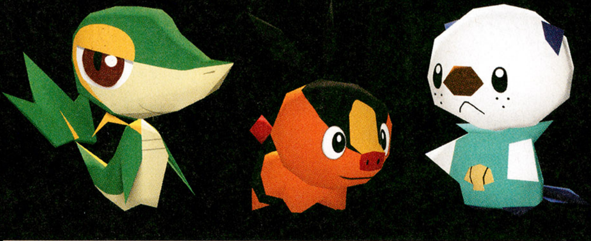
Wrestling Refined 68

Will WWE '12 be the biggest and best wrestling game to hit Wii? We speak to one of the game's designers—and several WWE performers—to get the scoop. Woo woo woo, you know it!

SUPER MARIO 3D LAND 48



THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: SKYWARD SWORD 58



POKÉMON RUMBLE BLAST 64

WWE '12 68

SHONEN JUMP
NARUTO
THE MOVIE SHIPPUDEN
-Bonds- 絆

© 2002 MASASHI KISHIMOTO /2007 SHIPPUDEN © NMP 2008

COMING TO DVD AND BLU-RAY
OCTOBER 2011

SHONEN JUMP
www.shonenjump.com

RATED T+ FOR OLDER TEEN
ratings.viz.com

HEROES OF ANIME
VIZ media
25 YEARS

For more Heroes of Anime,
visit www.viz.com/25years

CONTENTS • OCTOBER 2011

DEPARTMENTS

Pulse 6

Power Up 12

Download 28

Previews 34
- Ace Combat 3D 38
- Back to the Future: The Game 40
- Disney Universe 44
- Fishing Resort 42
- Mario & Sonic at the London 2012 Olympic Games (Wii) 36
- Nano Assault 43
- Shinobi 46
- Tekken 3D Prime Edition 34
- Wappy Dog 42

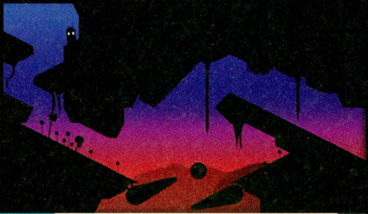
Playback 78

Reviews 79
- Aliens: Infestation 85
- Doctor Lautrec and the Forgotten Knights 84
- FIFA Soccer 12 (N3DS) 86
- FIFA Soccer 12 (Wii) 86
- Harvest Moon: The Tale of Two Towns 3D 84
- Harvest Moon: The Tale of Two Towns DS 84
- Kirby's Return to Dream Land 80
- Nikoli's Pencil Puzzle 84
- Pet Zombies 86
- Professor Layton and the Last Specter 82
- Rune Factory: Tides of Destiny 86
- Tetris Axis 83
- Thor: God of Thunder (N3DS) 83

Community 90

Next Month 96

POWER UP RHYTHM THIEF & THE EMPEROR'S TREASURE 12



DOWNLOAD NIGHTSKY 28

PREVIEW MARIO & SONIC AT THE LONDON 2012 OLYMPIC GAMES 36

REVIEW KIRBY'S RETURN TO DREAM LAND 80

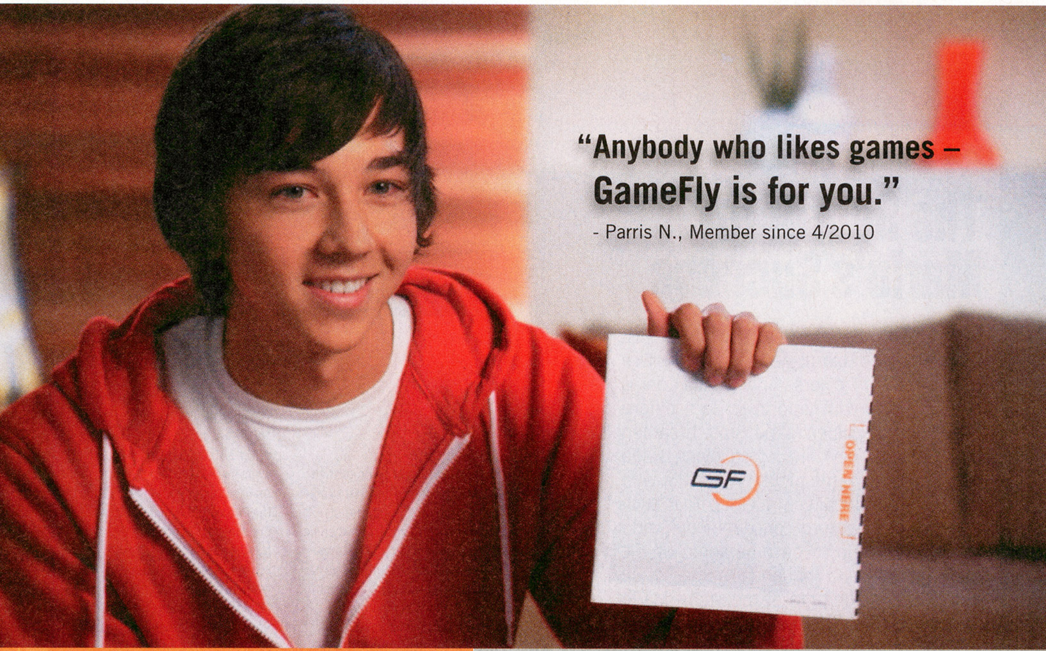
GAME INDEX

3D Classics: Urban Champion (N3DS)	32
Ace Combat 3D (N3DS)	38
Aliens: Infestation (DS)	85
Avenging Spirit (VC)	31
B Team—Episode 2: Ice and Venom (DW)	30
Back to the Future: The Game (Wii)	40
Beyond the Labyrinth (N3DS)	18
Blockado—Puzzle Island (DW)	30
Build-a-lot (DW)	30
Crazy Hamster (DW)	30
Cut the Rope (DW)	31
Disney Universe (Wii)	44
Doctor Lautrec and the Forgotten Knights (N3DS)	84
Dragon Quest X Online (Wii)	24
Drill Dozer (GBA)	78
FIFA Soccer 12 (Wii, N3DS)	86
Fishing Resort (Wii)	42
Flight Control (WW)	30
Gargoyle's Quest (VC)	31
Go! Go! Kokopolo (DW)	31
Good People Die (N3DS)	18
Harvest Moon: The Tale of Two Towns 3D (N3DS)	84
Harvest Moon: The Tale of Two Towns DS (DS)	84
The Ignition Factor (VC)	30
Kirby's Return to Dream Land (Wii)	80
Kyotokei (WW)	30
The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword (Wii)	58
Magical Whip: Wizards of the Phantasmal Forest (DW)	31
Mario & Sonic at the London 2012 Olympic Games (Wii)	36
Mario's Picross (VC)	32
Monochrome Racing (WW)	30
Nano Assault (N3DS)	43
NightSky (N3DS)	28
Nikoli's Pencil Puzzle (N3DS)	84
Pet Zombies (N3DS)	86
Pokédex 3D (N3DS)	29
Pokémon Rumble Blast (N3DS)	64
Professor Layton and the Last Specter (DS)	82
Rhythm Thief & The Emperor's Treasure (N3DS)	12
Rune Factory: Tides of Destiny (Wii)	86
Shinobi (N3DS)	46
Spirit Photography: The Haunted Notebook (N3DS)	18
Super Adventure Island II (VC)	30
Super Mario 3D Land (N3DS)	48
Tekken 3D Prime Edition (N3DS)	34
Tetris Axis (N3DS)	83
Thor: God of Thunder (N3DS)	83
Wappy Dog (DS)	42
WWE '12 (Wii)	68
WWE All Stars (N3DS)	24
Zen Pinball 3D (N3DS)	32
Zoonies—Escape from Makatu (DW)	31

DS = NINTENDO DS
DW = DSiWARE
GBA = GAME BOY ADVANCE
N3DS = NINTENDO 3DS
VC = VIRTUAL CONSOLE
Wii = Wii
WW = WiiWARE

POWER UP 🟥
DOWNLOAD 🟦
PREVIEW ⬛
FEATURE ▨
PLAYBACK 🟧
REVIEW 🟦

GF GAMEFLY.COM®
Games Delivered


GF
OPEN HERE

"Anybody who likes games – GameFly is for you."
- Parris N., Member since 4/2010

EXTENDED
FREE
TRIAL

1 Go to GameFly.com

2 Click the in top right corner

3 Enter NINTENDO

STARFOX 64 3D
NINTENDO 3DS
Wii
nickelodeon NICKTOONS MLB
2K PLAY
NINTENDO DS
DQM2
DRAGON QUEST MONSTERS Joker

Over 7,000 Titles

Video Game Rentals

No Late Fees

© 2011 GameFly, Inc. GAMEFLY and the GF Logo are trademarks of GameFly, Inc. All other marks used under license by their respective owners. Unless you cancel your account, your credit card will be charged for the price of your game plan at the end of your free trial. You must be 18 years of age or older and reside inside the 50 United States to use the GameFly service.

Pulse

The Secret to Mario's Success

Chris Slate

Evil turtles. Smiling clouds. Coin-dispensing bricks. Fire Flowers. Angry mushrooms with unibrows. Back before Super Mario Bros. breathed new life into a dying video game industry in 1985, who would've guessed that such absurd concepts would add up to become some of the most beloved and influential games of all time? As a lifelong fan of the Super Mario series, I've often tried to discern the key to the games' success; the secret ingredient that has made Mario's platformers such big hits while countless copycat games have been left by the wayside. And here's what I've come up with: there isn't one. No single piece of the puzzle is more indispensable than the rest—the key is in how they're put together. It's in the tempo of a well-designed stage; the feel of Mario's actions at our fingertips. Perhaps more than any of Nintendo's other games, the Super Mario titles exemplify the world-class skill of the company's game creators, who can seemingly craft a fun experience out of any set of elements just as a great conductor can weave together wildly different instruments to make beautiful music. Let's hope the Mario maestros at Nintendo continue to create new compositions for many years to come.

CHRIS SLATE **EDITOR IN CHIEF**

RESIDENT EVIL: REVELATIONS
STAR FOX 64 3D REVIEWED
15 YEARS OF N64
NINTENDO POWER
TETRIS FINALLY FOR NINTENDO 3DS
+
PROFESSOR LAYTON RETURNS! PG. 28
DOUBLE KIRBY
Future

V271 SEPTEMBER 2011

Chris Slate here, back once again to answer your letters while chasing my Tanooki tail around in circles. But first, this month's special letter request: what's the worst that you've ever been stuck in a game? Send your responses to the address on page 8, and we'll print the best ones!

LETTERS

Mister 300

My husband Jason accomplished quite a feat today, one that I am certain you will be impressed with. He was 10 years old when he was given an NES for Christmas in 1987, and since that time he has diligently kept track of every game that he's completed by listing them in a notebook. Well, today Jason beat his 300th NES game, which was GI Joe: The Atlantis Factor. Jason has actually beaten over 500 games across NES, Super NES, Game Boy, DS, and Wii, which is again quite an impressive feat! You would be hard-pressed to find a truer, more loyal Nintendo fan. —**AMY R.**

Wow, that's quite an accomplishment! I'm especially impressed because NES titles are generally much harder to beat than the games we get today. Tell your hubby to let us know if he ever puts his list online so that we can follow his progress!

We Need Bowser

Bowser may be a nuisance, but he actually helps the Mushroom Kingdom. Think about it: he pitches in to save the day whenever Princess Peach gets kidnapped by someone else, and if he didn't sometimes kidnap her himself, we wouldn't get to play Mario games! —**SHYFANGUY**

Little Poes

I've been playing Master Quest on The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time 3D nonstop recently, and while I was in the Forest Temple, I realized something while battling the Poe sisters. When I checked the name of the first one with Navi, it was Beth. I was recently in a play based on the novel *Little Women*, so I immediately thought, "Wouldn't it be funny if the other Poe sisters were named after the sisters in *Little Women*?" Sure enough, the next three Poes were named Joelle, Amy, and Meg, the same as the characters in the book. I think it's really cool when Nintendo sneaks in little references like that, and even cooler when I actually get them.

—**LOMANIC**

Wow, you just blew my mind! To think that there was still something I didn't know about Ocarina of Time, even after more than a decade of playing it.... That's a true classic for you!

Raving Rayfan

Since reading your article on Rayman Origins, I have been *so* psyched for the game! I usually look at a game's concept art and think, "This looks so much better than the actual game art." But with Rayman Origins it's like the concept art *is* the game art, which is—in a word—freaking awesome! (OK, that was two words, but who's counting?) —**VISIBLECC1**

Thanks for bringing back so many good memories with your N64 anniversary article. I'll never forget the first time I popped out of that pipe in front of Peach's castle...or the epic Super Smash Bros. battles my brother and I had...or staying up all night when we first got The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time. I'll always have a soft spot in my heart for "The Fun Machine." —**PATRICK M.**

The Nintendo 64 Age of Innovation

Fifteen years ago the Nintendo 64 arrived—and gaming changed forever.

WHENEVER NINTENDO releases a new game system, a few things are pretty much assured: impressive new technology, awesome new games, and a whole lot of fun. But when the Nintendo 64 console arrived a decade and a half ago, it brought us more than that—it changed the way games were made and the way games were played. Side-scrolling 2D environments gave way to deeply immersive polygonal worlds, and solitary experiences were augmented by raucous social gatherings. Terms such as "analog control" and "camera manipulation" ingrained themselves in the everyday gaming lexicon. Fantasy became more fantastic and reality became more realistic. In short, gaming made a triumphant leap forward as the N64 established the blueprint for the modern era of video gaming—and, of course, iconic characters such as Mario, Link, Kirby, Pikachu, Captain Falcon, and Fox McCloud came along for the ride. To celebrate 15 years since the debut of the Nintendo 64, we take a look back at the ways the system (and its games) redefined interactive entertainment.

STEPPING INTO A POLYGONAL WORLD

Lucky Number 7

Maybe it's just me, but I kinda don't like how the new Mario Kart is just called Mario Kart 7. —**RASCAL**

It *is* an interesting choice since no previous Mario Kart has been numbered, but then again, the series stopped using real subtitles with Mario Kart: Double Dash!! for GameCube. Personally, I'll take Mario Kart 7 over Mario Kart 3D, which might have been a more obvious choice.

Funky Falcon

Funky Kong and Captain Falcon have many features in common: they each wear shades and a belt, and both make interesting fashion choices, such as Funky's cut-off shorts and Falcon's shoulder pads. Who knows: maybe underneath Falcon's race gear is a big furry ape. —**PEZ002**

Family Tradition

I just realized that Marin and her father Tarin from The Legend of Zelda: Link's Awakening DX obviously get their names from Malon and her father Talon from The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time! —**I AM GAMER**

Puzzle-Piece Punishment

All three of my family members own a Nintendo 3DS and love it! Everyone considers their Play Coins too valuable to spend on new Puzzle Swap pieces, so we've devised a fun way to collect them without burdening any one player: we bet. When an argument arises, the loser has to pony up a new puzzle piece. This way, even if you lose the argument, everyone wins! —**WESLEY WC**

What The...?

I came home one day and went to my basement to play Mario Party 7. The basement was really hot, so I took off my clothes. Soon a minigame came up where I had to rapidly press the A Button. I do this best while kneeling, so I knelt and started repeatedly pressing A. Then my older brother came down and saw me in my underwear, kneeling, and rapidly pressing A.... That was awkward. —**GORONGOD**

You don't know what a relief it was to read that you were at least wearing underwear.

Luigi Love

I was overjoyed to see Luigi's Mansion 2 in your magazine. I never stopped believing that Luigi would star in another game some day, and now my wish is coming true! —**LUIGIANDSHADOWGIRL**

DON'T HASSLE THE HOFF

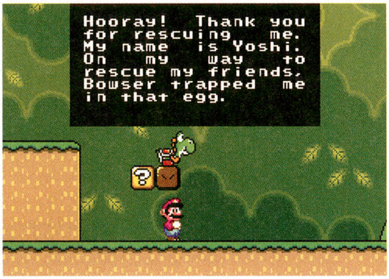
Hey, Hoffman! Why don't you have your own video game? And if you did, what would it be about? I have some good ideas. You could have a game where you beat up lamer members of the NP crew and take over the magazine. Another good idea would be that you get to wear a green tunic and go on an adventure with an annoying fairy and a sword. I'd like to hear your idea for an epic game, so please respond! —**RED TUNIC**

The Hoff says: I have several game ideas, but after writing two wrestling articles for this issue (see pages 24 and 68), my top pick would be a game called Spanish Announce Table. In it, you'd use various traps and devices (such as a trebuchet) to launch Steve Thomason, Justin Cheng, and Michael Cole into the table and try to cause as much destruction as possible. Chris Slate would be suspended in a cage above the mayhem and would act as my personal ring announcer. C'mon, THQ, you know you want to do it!

Egg on Our Face

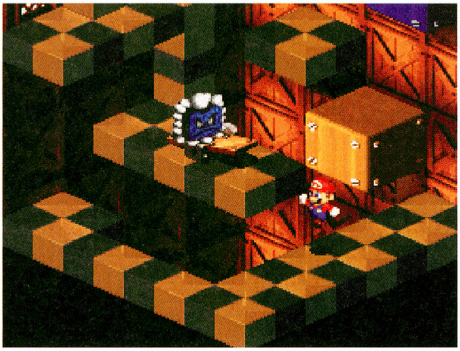
In response to a reader's question in Vol. 270—"Which came first, the Yoshi or the egg?"—you answered that it was the egg. But when you first find Yoshi in Super Mario World, he says that Bowser *put* him inside the egg. —**POPPYBRO101**

Hey, you're right! Now I'm *really* confused. Ow. I think I just sprained my brain.



Hooray! Thank you for rescuing me. My name is Yoshi. On my way to rescue my friends, Bowser trapped me in that egg.

What's Bowser doing stuffing Yoshis into eggs, anyway? Who would bully someone like that? He couldn't just give them wedgies?



Super Mario RPG for the Super NES would make for a great Nintendo 3DS game. With 3D effects, I could finally make those tricky jumps with ease. **—MS. MOBLIN**

Which classic Nintendo game would you remake for the Nintendo 3DS system, and how would you improve it?

I would bring Duck Hunt to N3DS as a Nintendo eShop game. I'd add a mode in which you control the duck and try to avoid the hunter, and another mode called Whack-a-Dog that lets you finally blast that evil demon of a dog. **—THE BIG BANK O' RUPEES**

I'd remake Eternal Darkness: Sanity's Requiem. Eternal Darkness was one of the first games I ever played on the GameCube, and I loved it! I'd use the extra horsepower of the Nintendo 3DS to bring the visuals up-to-date, and use stereoscopic 3D effects to enhance the game's dramatic camera angles, which are often top-down. The touch screen could show the inventory and be used with some of the puzzles. Throw in a few extra alternate endings, and Eternal Darkness: Sanity's Requiem 3D could be a platform-maker for the Nintendo 3DS! **—THE LEGEND OF TATER: A LINK TO THE TOTS**

I would take Paperboy and make it more realistic. I'd add obstacles like people who try to avoid payment, gang members who try to muscle the paperboy, pit bulls, sleep deprivation due to loud partying, and people who steal papers. Basically, "Paperboy in the ghetto" is my idea. See what you can do. **—DERRICK P.**

If I could remake any classic Nintendo game for the Nintendo 3DS, the obvious choice would be F-Zero X for the N64. As amazing as the game was way back when, imagine it with upgraded graphics and added gyroscopic controls. Plus, who wouldn't love to see a track whizzing by them at 700km in 3D? **—RGOESSL**

What about Super Metroid? You could switch between first- and third-person perspectives, and the bottom screen could display the map and upgrades. **—JAKIRBY**

My cousins and I recently rediscovered The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask on Virtual Console, and I would love to see this gem remade on the N3DS in a similar fashion to Ocarina of Time 3D. As for what to change: nothing! Some would argue to remove the game's repeating three-day structure, but I say that it's the best hook ever used in a Zelda game. **—COLTON**

I know that it's already been remade, but I can't help it: I want GoldenEye 007 on Nintendo 3DS. Gyroscope controls would be a perfect fit for it. I would rather have Pierce Brosnsan back as Bond instead of Daniel Craig—or better yet, the game could let us choose to play as any of the actors who have portrayed 007 so that we could finally settle who the best James Bond is! **—LIS4REAL25**

Super Mario Sunshine *has* to be remade. A touch-screen map would make the game much better, and the 3D effects would be amazing. **—PRIMAGEN**

I was just thinking that Nintendo should revive Kirby Tilt 'n' Tumble for the N3DS. It would control perfectly with the Nintendo 3DS system's motion controls, and since Kirby will turn 20 next year, it would be nice for Nintendo to revive one of the puffball's forgotten titles. **—DEATH BREATH**

PLEASE WRITE US

pulse@nintendopower.com

OR VIA CARRIER PIGEON AT

Nintendo Power/Pulse
c/o Future US
4000 Shoreline Court, Ste. 400
South San Francisco, CA 94080

TIPS FOR GETTING YOUR LETTER PUBLISHED:

Understand that the magazine staff is separate from Nintendo; we don't make the games.

Don't send links to game coverage on the Web—trust us; we see it all.

Don't ask about the status of upcoming games, or whether certain games will be announced; if we have that info, we'll always tell you.

NINTENDO POWER

TANOOKI TAIL-TWIRLERS

EDITOR IN CHIEF **Chris Slate**
EXECUTIVE EDITOR **Steve Thomason**
SENIOR EDITOR **Chris Hoffman**
ASSOCIATE EDITOR **Justin Cheng**
ART DIRECTOR **John Seeger Gilman**
CREATIVE DIRECTOR **Chris Imlay**
CONTRIBUTING DESIGNER **Rebekah Lane**
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS **Patrick Cunningham, Andrew Hayward, Casey Loe, Nathan Meunier, Andy Myers, Randy Nelson, David Smith, Phil Theobald**
COPY EDITOR **Candace Cunningham**
INTERNS **Cody Martin, Kenny Martin**
LICENSING MANAGER **Frances Wall Jha**

BUSINESS
VICE PRESIDENT, CONSUMER MEDIA
Kelley Corten, kcorten@futureus.com
VICE PRESIDENT, SALES & MARKETING
Rachelle Considine, rconsidine@futureus.com
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR INTEGRATED SALES
Nate Hunt, nhunt@futureus.com
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF SALES
Isaac Ugay, iugay@futureus.com
REGIONAL SALES DIRECTOR
Carol Gillard, cgillard@futureus.com
REGIONAL SALES MANAGER
Arthur St. Germain, astgermain@futureus.com
REGIONAL SALES MANAGER
Doug Parsons, dparsons@futureus.com
REGIONAL SALES MANAGER
Jen Doerger, jdoerger@futureus.com
ADVERTISING COORDINATOR
Heidi Hapin, hhapin@futureus.com

MARKETING & SALES DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR **Rhoda Bueno**
CIRCULATION DIRECTOR **Crystal Hudson**
NEWSSTAND DIRECTOR **Bill Shewey**
CONSUMER MARKETING OPERATIONS DIRECTOR **Lisa Radler**
RENEWAL & BILLING MANAGER **Mike Hill**
MARKETING ASSOCIATE **Robbie Montinola**

PRODUCTION
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR **Michael Hollister**
PRODUCTION MANAGER **Larry Briseno**
PRINT ORDER COORDINATOR **Jennifer Lim**

CONSUMER MARKETING
MARKETING & SALES DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR **Rhoda Bueno**
CIRCULATION DIRECTOR **Crystal Hudson**
NEWSSTAND DIRECTOR **Bill Shewey**
CONSUMER MARKETING OPERATIONS DIRECTOR **Lisa Radler**
RENEWAL & BILLING MANAGER **Mike Hill**
MARKETING ASSOCIATE **Robbie Montinola**

FUTURE US, Inc.
4000 Shoreline Court,
Suite 400, South San
Francisco, CA 94080
www.futureus.com

PRESIDENT **John Marcom**
VICE PRESIDENT & CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER **John Sutton**
VICE PRESIDENT, INTERNET & MOBILE PRODUCTS **Mark Kramer**
GENERAL COUNSEL **Anne Ortel**
HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR **Nancy DuBois**

FUTURE PLC
30 Monmouth St., Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW, England
Tel +44 1225 442244 / www.futureplc.com

NON-EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN: Peter Allen
CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Stevie Spring
GROUP FINANCE DIRECTOR: John Bowman

Nintendo Power Customer Care
P.O. Box 5770, Harlan, IA 51593-1270
1-866-941-8368
For Subscription Problems Only!
nintendopower@cdsfulfillment.com.
http://service.futureus-inc.com/
REPRINTS: For reprints, contact Reprint Management Services, 717.399.1900 ext. 100

Game trademarks and copyrights are property of their respective owners. TM, ®, the Nintendo DS logo and the Wii logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2011 Nintendo.

ISSN: 1041-9551

Nintendo Power magazine is published by Future US, Inc. under an official licensing agreement with Nintendo of America Inc. Future US is a wholly independent company from Nintendo, and the opinions and views expressed in this publication are solely those of the magazine's writers and do not represent official communication by, or on behalf of, Nintendo.

Official Nintendo Seal ®

POST GAME SHOWER
28
Football has gone to the dogs!
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Wii
PC
DVD-ROM
JUDO BABY
PC
Wii
Jerry & Nitus
JERRY RICE & NITUS' DOG FOOTBALL
88
55

© 2011 JUDOBABY INC.
Wii is a trademark of Nintendo. © 2006 Nintendo.
judobaby.com

What Nintendo fans think, want, and do

The SCORE

WEIGH IN ON NEXT MONTH'S TOPICS AT WWW.NINTENDOPOWER.COM/POLLS.

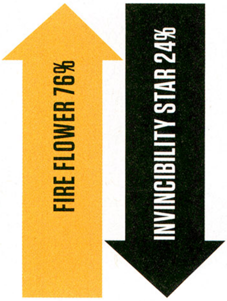
PICK YOUR REWARD:

THE UNDYING GRATITUDE AND RESPECT OF EVERYONE IN THE MUSHROOM KINGDOM

53 PERCENT

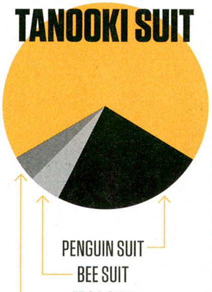
A CAKE BAKED BY PRINCESS PEACH

47 PERCENT

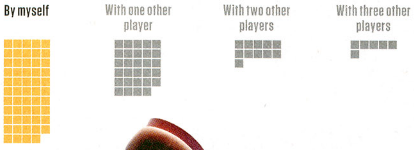


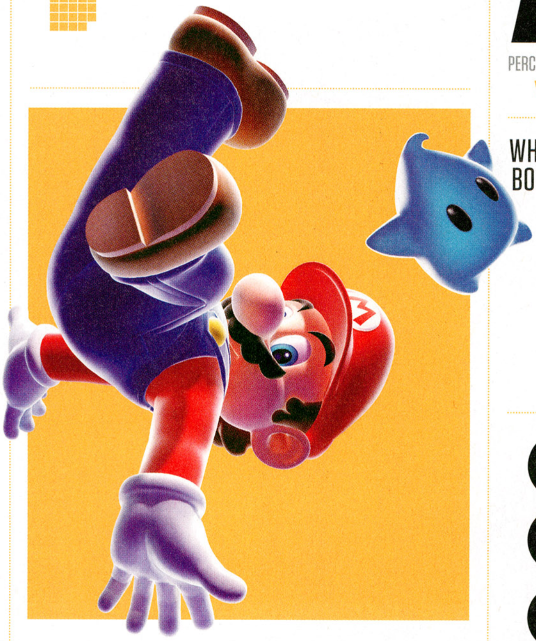
PICK ONE TO WEAR IN PUBLIC:

TANOOKI SUIT



I PLAY NEW SUPER MARIO BROS. Wii...





MARIO'S GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT?

GOING INTO SPACE

Going into space 51%
Introducing a new style of kart racing 34%
Becoming a doctor 9%
Winning an Olympic gold medal 6%

70

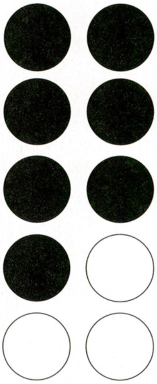
PERCENT OF YOU WOULD SACRIFICE YOSHI TO SAVE YOURSELF

WHICH FORMER FINAL BOSS SHOULD MARIO FACE AGAIN?

WARIO: 54%
(SUPER MARIO LAND 2: 6 GOLDEN COINS)

WART: 30%
(SUPER MARIO BROS. 2)

TATANGA: 16%
(SUPER MARIO LAND)



(7 OUT OF 10) WOULD STOMP A GOOMBA OVER A KOOPA

SHONEN JUMP
BLEACH
ブリーチ
Fade to Black
THE MOVIE

Watch the BLEACH TV series now at VIZAnime.com!

HEROES OF ANIME
VIZ media
25 YEARS

COMING TO DVD AND BLU-RAY
NOVEMBER 2011

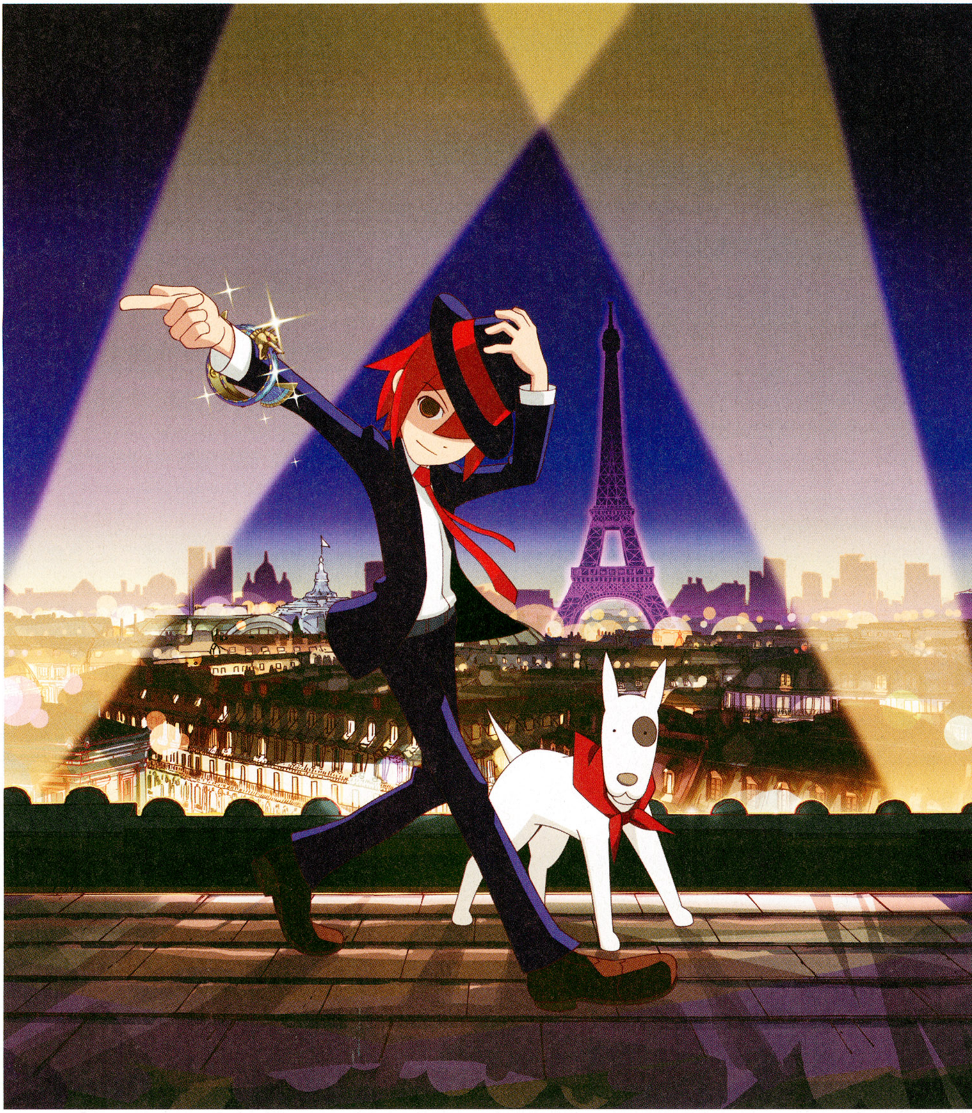
For more Heroes of Anime, visit www.viz.com/25years

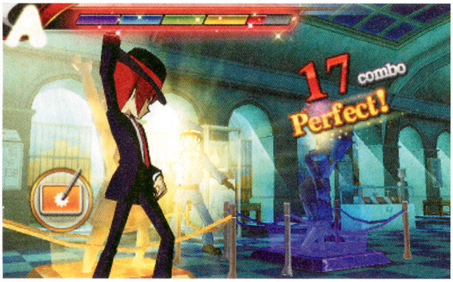
© Tite Kubo/Shueisha, TV TOKYO, dentsu, Pierrot
© BMP 2008

RATED T FOR TEEN ratings.viz.com

SHONEN JUMP
shonenjump.viz.com

POWER UP





Smooth Criminal

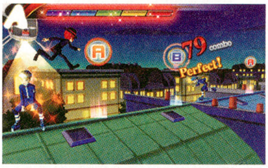
Sega gets into some musical mischief with Rhythm Thief & The Emperor's Treasure for Nintendo 3DS.

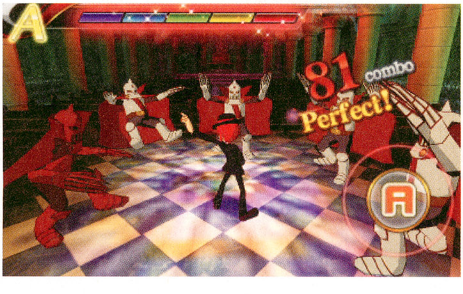
IF YOU WERE to put Michael Jackson's music videos, Sly Cooper, and Elite Beat Agents in a blender, you might end up with something like Rhythm Thief & The Emperor's Treasure. Due in early 2012, this Nintendo 3DS system-exclusive follows renowned cat burglar Raphael as he scours Paris for the Wristlet of Tiamat, a legendary treasure that promises to unravel the mystery behind his father's disappearance. Raphael's quest unfolds through an assortment of rhythm-based challenges, a few of which we recently had a chance to sample.

One of the game's earliest levels sees our protagonist breaking into the Louvre. To avoid detection by security, players must help him hide behind various statues, tapping one of four icons on the bottom screen to match each sculpture's pose. The next chapter follows Raphael's rooftop escape from a brigade of roller-skate constables, and is probably best described as a rhythm platformer. Pressing A or B as prompted allows the thief to jump over chimneys, slide through open windows, and swing from pipes. The action does a great job of matching the beat, and the game's up-tempo soundtrack amplifies the caper atmosphere.

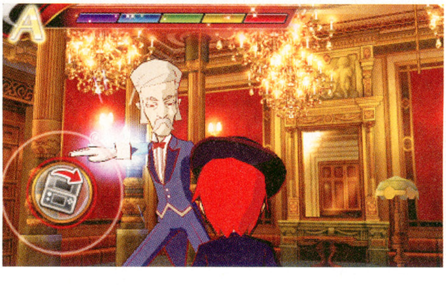
A subsequent level introduces the game's female lead—Marie—and reveals that Napoleon Bonaparte is evidently back from the dead. (Yes, things can get pretty wacky in Rhythm Thief.) He sends his henchmen to capture the girl, and it's your duty to knock them out, throwing left punches via the Control Pad and rights via the A Button. In a nod to Sega's rhythm-game legacy, another stage is basically an adaptation of Samba de Amigo. You even strike poses via the handheld's gyroscope while "Vamos a Carnaval!" plays. We also saw levels that had Raphael cooking up dishes in a restaurant, running through sewers, and dancing around famous Parisian landmarks. The game certainly isn't lacking for variety, and Sega promises the final product will offer more than 35 stages.

Sprinkled throughout are some beautifully animated cut-scenes that combine traditional cel animation with CG elements, and all of which have been rendered in stereoscopic 3D. The game as a whole features a colorful, vibrant aesthetic that really pops. All in all, our first glimpse of Rhythm Heaven left us pretty excited. This is the kind of quirky creativity that made the original Nintendo DS such a hit and that we'd love to see more of on Nintendo's 3D handheld. **—STEVE T.**





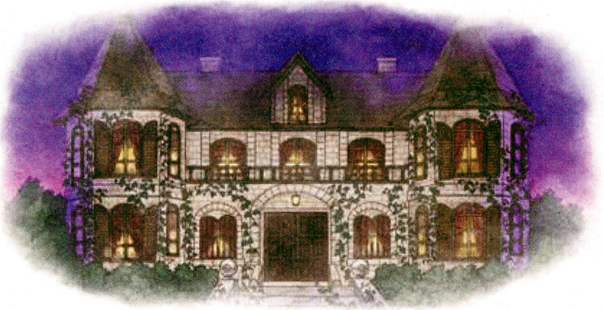
[Below] As this pugilistic butler tries to smack Raphael upside the head, you have to tilt the Nintendo 3DS left or right to dodge.

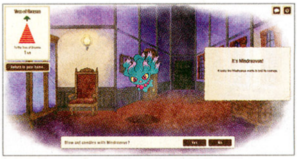


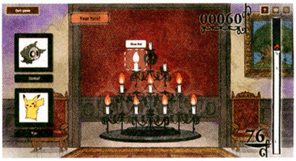
PGL Halloween Hijinks

The **Pokémon Global Link** opens a brand-new Pokémon Dream World destination!

LAST ISSUE we brought you up to speed on the Pokémon Global Link (www.pokemon.com/pgl), the website that connects to Pokémon Black and Pokémon White Version. Now we've got an exciting new PGL feature to tell you about: Spooky Manor! This mysterious new Island of Dreams area will herald the Halloween season with its arrival on September 28th. Inside Spooky Manor you can meet lots of Ghost-type and Psychic-type Pokémon, play a new minigame to befriend them, and take them back to your copy of Pokémon Black Version or Pokémon White Version—plus you can obtain new décor items to decorate your room with. If you still haven't logged onto the Pokémon Global Link, now's the time! —**CHRIS S.**



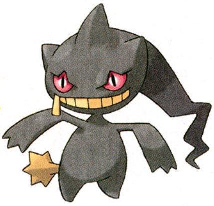

Return to your home.
It's Misdreavus!
Blow out candles with Misdreavus?
Yes
No



Get Banette!

This Banette comes with the Cotton Guard move, which raises the user's defense by 3! To get it, use this password: **NPCHARACTER**

* Visit this webpage for further instructions: http://pglhelp.pokemon.com/en/02_01/



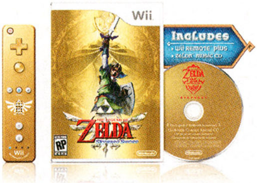
STATS

LEVEL: 37

GENDER: Female

HIDDEN ABILITY: Cursed Body

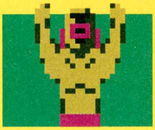
MOVES: Faint Attack, Hex, Shadow Ball, Cotton Guard

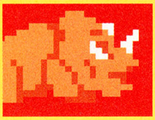


A Legendary Bundle

When The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword finally launches on November 20th, every copy in the initial production run will come packaged with a special bonus: a music CD filled with orchestral arrangements of select songs from The Legend of Zelda 25th Anniversary Symphony Concert! And if that isn't enough to get your Hyrulean blood flowing, there will also be a limited-edition bundle that includes a golden Wii Remote Plus controller for a suggested retail price of $69.99.

A WINNER IS...
Air conditioning.

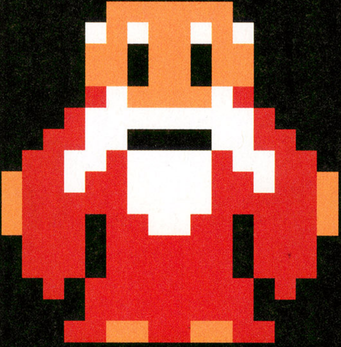




DODONGO DISLIKES...
Instant-death spells.

“IT’S DANGEROUS TO GO ALONE! TAKE THIS.”

—OLD MAN, THE LEGEND OF ZELDA, 1987



NINTENDO POWER

We speak games.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY: www.nintendopower.com/speak

© 1987 Nintendo.
The Legend of Zelda and
Nintendo Power are
trademarks of Nintendo.

Future
MEDIA WITH PASSION

FIRST APPEARANCE:
PHOENIX WRIGHT: ACE ATTORNEY
NINTENDO DS, 2005

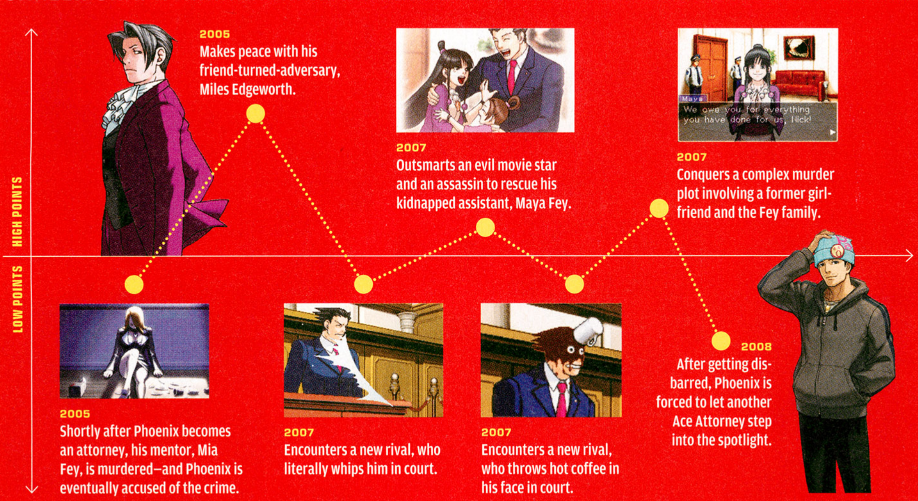
STAR POWER

A closer look at the characters we love

Phoenix Wright

He's not some old, stodgy, run-of-the-mill lawyer; he's an Ace Attorney.

CAREER GRAPH



2005
Shortly after Phoenix becomes an attorney, his mentor, Mia Fey, is murdered—and Phoenix is eventually accused of the crime.

2005
Makes peace with his friend-turned-adversary, Miles Edgeworth.

2007
Encounters a new rival, who literally whips him in court.

2007
Outsmarts an evil movie star and an assassin to rescue his kidnapped assistant, Maya Fey.

2007
Encounters a new rival, who throws hot coffee in his face in court.

Maya
We owe you for everything you have done for us, Nick!

2007
Conquers a complex murder plot involving a former girlfriend and the Fey family.

2008
After getting disbarred, Phoenix is forced to let another Ace Attorney step into the spotlight.

OUR FAVORITE PHOENIX WRIGHT GAMES

Phoenix
That was the sound you heard!

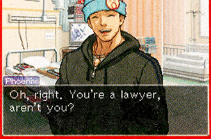
Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney
NINTENDO DS, 2005
The original Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney proves a surprising fact: a video game about a lawyer can actually be fun. With luck, wisdom, and a little spiritual guidance, Phoenix is able to defend the innocent and expose the guilty.

Phoenix
Mr. Wellington loves large bananas!

Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney Justice for All
NINTENDO DS, 2007
Building upon its predecessor's winning formula of point-and-click adventuring and contradiction-exposing courtroom battles, Justice for All adds the ability to break through witnesses' lies during investigation sequences.

Phoenix
Err, I... I admit that I was there...

Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney Trials and Tribulations
NINTENDO DS, 2007
Trials and Tribulations delves into Phoenix's past and ties up many of the franchise's major plot threads. In addition to Phoenix, players get to control Phoenix's mentor, Mia, and Phoenix's friend/rival Miles Edgeworth.

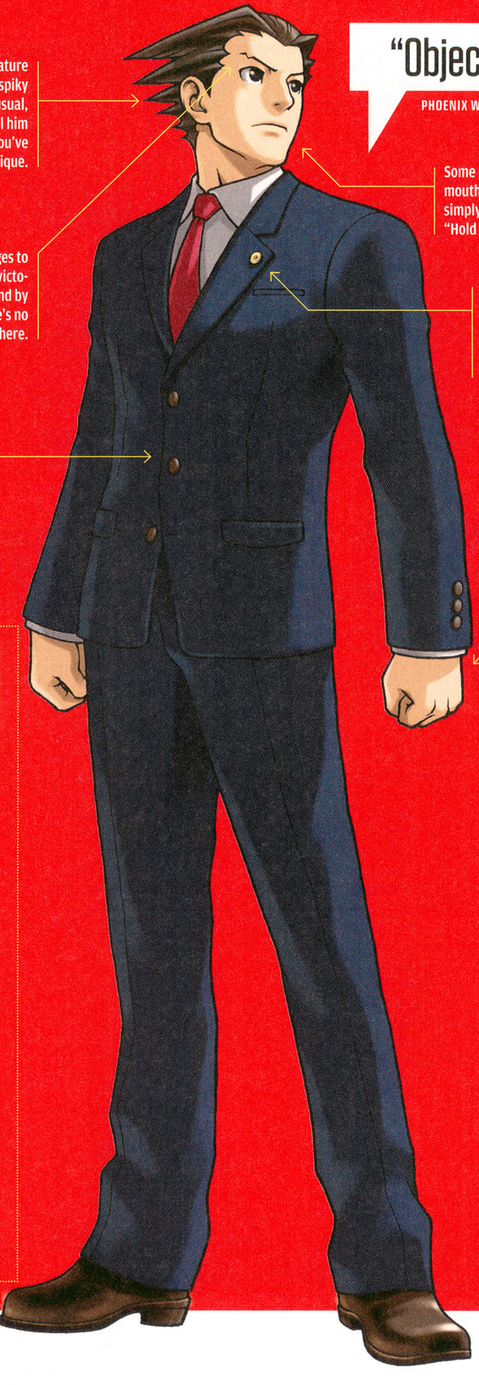


Phoenix
Oh, right. You're a lawyer, aren't you?

Apollo Justice: Ace Attorney
NINTENDO DS, 2008
Although he allows young upstart Apollo Justice to take the lead role, Phoenix still plays a huge part in this game, which is set seven years after the previous installment. No longer an attorney, Phoenix is now a father and a mentor.

"Objection!"

PHOENIX WRIGHT: ACE ATTORNEY
NINTENDO DS, 2005



Phoenix's most identifiable feature is probably his slicked-back spiky hair. Yes, it might be unusual, and sure, it makes people call him "porcupine-head," but you've gotta admit it's unique.

Some people might think Phoenix uses his mouth only for yelling, "Objection!" That's simply not true. He also yells, "Take that!" and, "Hold it!" on a regular basis.

It seems that Phoenix manages to achieve many of his courtroom victories through pure dumb luck (and by the skin of his teeth), but there's no doubt a brilliant legal mind in here.

In the world of Ace Attorney, you need an attorney's badge as proof of your profession. Phoenix has often commented that no one would believe he's an attorney if it weren't for this badge.

Let's be honest: most video game heroes don't have very good fashion sense. Phoenix, on the other hand, is always dressed for success. He doesn't just defend the innocent; he looks good doing it.

It's been said that it's not nice to point, but don't tell that to Phoenix Wright. You'll frequently see him with his arm outstretched, pointing with his index finger as he makes his energetic arguments in court.

I didn't do it...!

CRIMINAL RECORD?

Although Phoenix Wright is usually in the courtroom to protect his clients, he has actually found himself in the defendant's chair on numerous occasions. While attending college, Phoenix was accused of murdering fellow student Doug Swallow. Mia Fey proved his innocence, and this event helped convince Phoenix to become an attorney. Mia herself was killed a few years later, and Phoenix was at one point accused of the crime; he had to defend himself against the charges and expose the true criminal. Some time later, Phoenix was accused of murdering a man named Shadi Smith, but Apollo Justice absolved him of any wrongdoing.

PHOENIX RISING

In the Japanese version of Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney, Phoenix is named Ryuuichi Naruhodou. So how did he get renamed Phoenix Wright for North America? Capcom localization editor Eric Bailey explains: "We wanted to make sure that the first name was something that would really stand out with players, and so we went back and forth with the translator and the R&D team to determine the name that would work. During the brainstorming, when everyone was throwing out whatever names came to mind, there was a wide range of them—everything from Cole to Wilton—but in the end Phoenix had a good ring to it and symbolized rising from the ashes, perfect for the game's theme, which is turnabouts. We also needed a shortened form of Phoenix for some of the characters to use in the dialog and the final nickname arrived at was 'Nick,' since it sounded natural but was still reasonable given the sound of 'Phoenix.' Of course, we always made sure to explain any of the naming choices to the game's creator to make sure it was something he would like, and he ended up liking Phoenix Wright as well."

POWER QUIZ

EASY

In what year was the Game Boy Color released?

AVERAGE

What is the official name used to describe the color of the translucent purple Game Boy Color system?

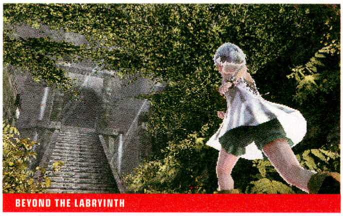
GAME BOY
Nintendo
GAME BOY COLOR

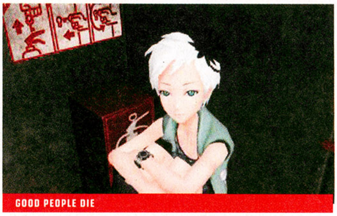
HARDCORE

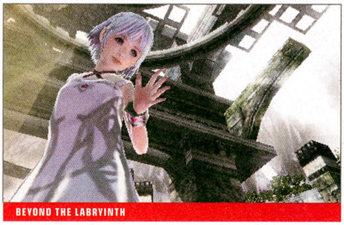
What was the last Game Boy Color game to be released in the US?

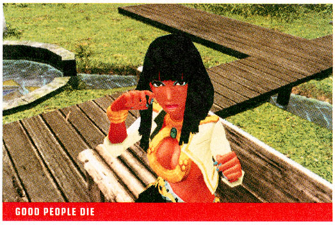
ANSWERS

EASY: 1998; AVERAGE: Atomic Purple; HARDCORE: Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets


BEYOND THE LABRYINTH


GOOD PEOPLE DIE


BEYOND THE LABRYINTH


GOOD PEOPLE DIE

Into the Unknown

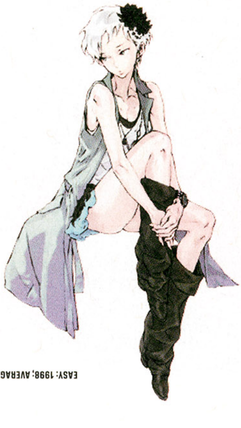
NEWS *from* JAPAN

New Nintendo 3DS titles invite players to explore supernatural phenomena, a mysterious labyrinth, and the limits of human cooperation.

WE DIDN'T EXPECT to see much news out of Japan this month, with both the Tokyo Game Show and a Nintendo-hosted conference right around the corner. Yet surprisingly, there has been a steady flow of intriguing new titles revealed for the Nintendo 3DS system.

First up is Spirit Photography: The Haunted Notebook, a new Fatal Frame spin-off from the team at Tecmo who produced the Japan-only Fatal Frame 4 for the Wii console. The Fatal Frame series features players exploring haunted locales and trapping ghosts on film with special cameras, making it a natural fit for the camera-equipped N3DS. Employing the same concept as the AR Cards packed in with the handheld, Spirit Photography comes with a special notebook that can be used for a variety of ghost-photographing minigames. The notebook also plays a major role in the game's story mode, an interactive, alternate-reality mystery entitled Fatal Frame: The Purple Diary. Details about how this story unfolds are sketchy, but it certainly sounds unique.

Beyond the Labyrinth was announced back in April, but the first footage of the game has only just been released. The title is being developed by tri-Ace (makers of the Star Ocean and Valkyrie Profile series) and directed by Takayuki Suguro, who helmed tri-Ace's recent Resonance of Fate and worked on Final Fantasy Tactics and Vagrant Story for Square. The game stars a spirited young girl who often speaks directly to the player as she explores a mysterious and beautiful labyrinth. The early trailers of the game have featured no combat whatsoever, suggesting the gameplay will be focused primarily on puzzles and navigation. We'll find out more soon; publisher Konami promises that the game will be playable at the upcoming Tokyo Game Show.

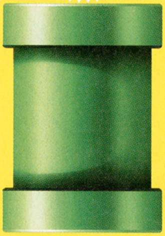


Finally, ChunSoft has unveiled the sequel to cult hit 999: Nine Hours, Nine Persons, Nine Doors; it has an ominous title that roughly translates to "Good People Die." The game looks dramatically different from its predecessor: Street Fighter character designer Kinu Nishimura is still drawing the cast, but the game features polygonally modeled characters in 3D environments instead of artwork on prerendered backdrops. Storywise, however, the game seems like the logical successor to the engrossing 999: the cast (which features a few familiar faces) is again being forced to play a life-and-death game against their will, but this time there's a new theme of betrayal, with rules that encourage the participants to turn on each other instead of cooperating. **—CASEY L.**

WARP ZONE

What we were writing about way back when

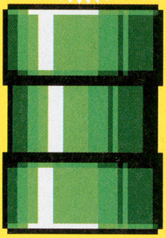
5 YEARS AGO



Sixteen years after its overseas debut, Final Fantasy III—the real Final Fantasy III, not the game that was released in Japan as Final Fantasy VI—was at long last announced for North America. Modernized for the Nintendo DS, the game earned itself the cover spot of the October 2006 issue of Nintendo Power. Also in that issue, Steve T. and Chris H. predicted that NiGHTS, Klonoa, Punch-Out!!, Silent Hill, and The House of the Dead would be coming to Wii. Are they psychic or just awesome?

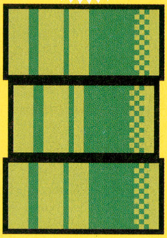
EXCLUSIVE: EA LOVES Wii!
NINTENDO POWER
FINAL FANTASY III
An epic for the ages on Nintendo DS
LOST IN SPACE?

10 YEARS AGO



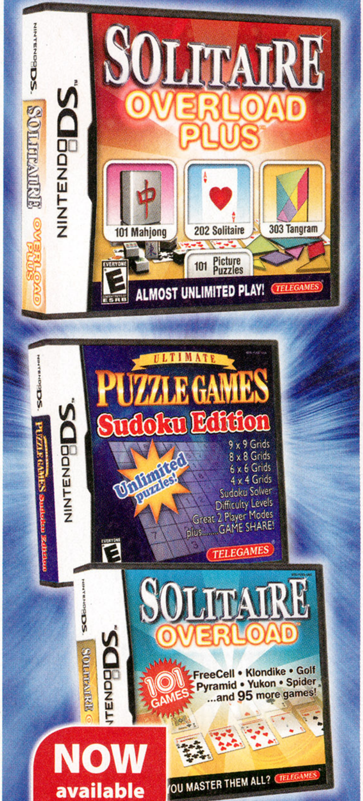
With the GameCube ready to land in stores, the October 2001 issue was packed with info on games for the then-upcoming console, including Star Wars Rogue Leader: Rogue Squadron II, Luigi's Mansion, Super Monkey Ball, and Wave Race: Blue Storm. The Game Boy Advance wasn't ignored, either; the issue delivered features on Advance Wars and Golden Sun. But our favorite part was an interview with Sonic the Hedgehog co-creator Yuji Naka in which he stated, "I'd like to see Sonic and Mario give each other a hug."

20 YEARS AGO



Futuristic Mode 7-enhanced racing game F-Zero (for Super NES) and handheld horror-action game Castlevania II: Belmont's Revenge (for Game Boy) were probably the two biggest titles featured in the October 1991 issue of Nintendo Power, but the cover went to Ultra Games's NES adaptation of Star Trek. The issue also contained a full walkthrough of Metroid (for NES), which was already considered a classic four years after its release.

Virtually Unlimited Entertainment


NINTENDO DS
SOLITAIRE OVERLOAD PLUS
101 Mahjong
202 Solitaire
303 Tangram
101 Picture Puzzles
ALMOST UNLIMITED PLAY!
TELEGAMES
ULTIMATE PUZZLE GAMES Sudoku Edition
9 x 9 Grids
8 x 8 Grids
6 x 6 Grids
4 x 4 Grids
Sudoku Solver
Difficulty Levels
Great 2 Player Modes
plus....... GAME SHARE!
Unlimited puzzles!
SOLITAIRE OVERLOAD
101 GAMES
FreeCell • Klondike • Golf
Pyramid • Yukon • Spider
...and 95 more games!
YOU MASTER THEM ALL?

NOW available for iPad

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

All Games Designed with VUE™ Technology

AVAILABLE AT

BEST BUY · GameStop · amazon.com · TARGET

TELEGAMES®

Web site: www.telegames.com

THAT WAS AWESOME!

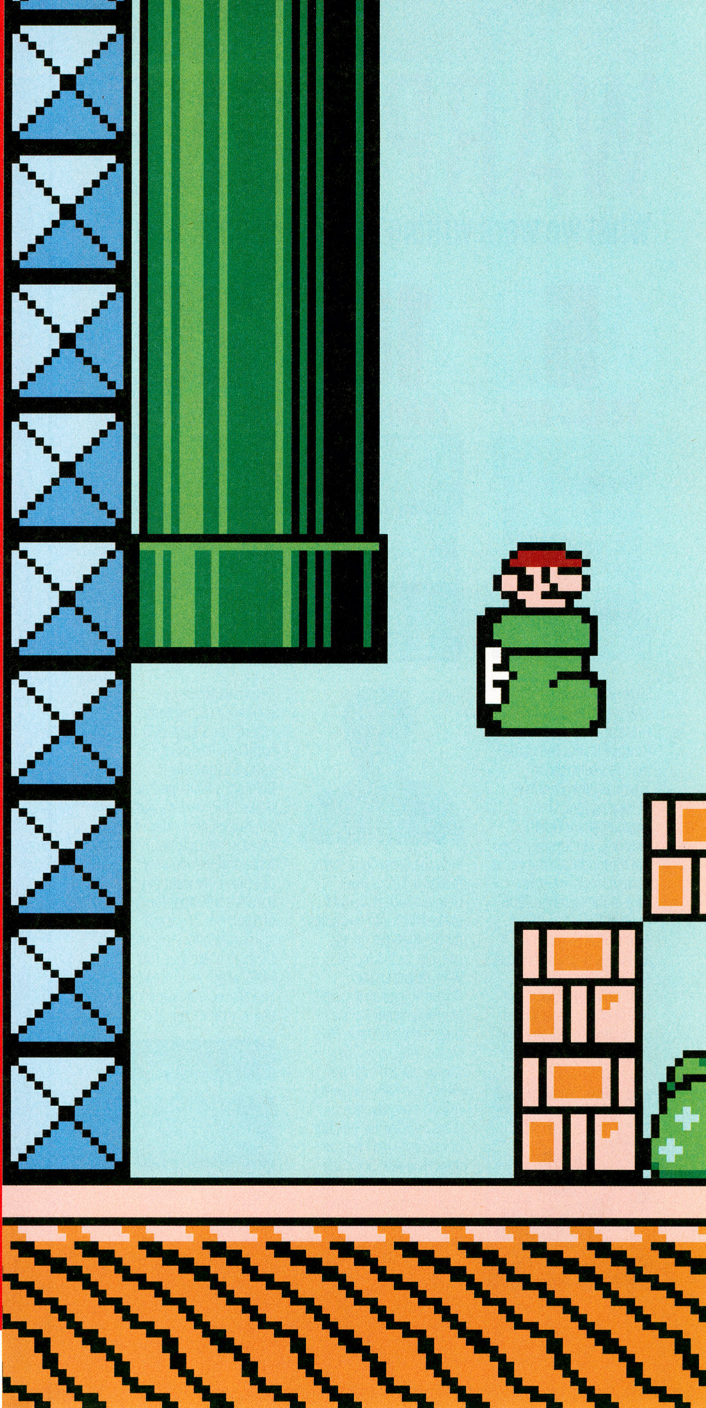
OUR FAVORITE VIDEO GAME MOMENTS

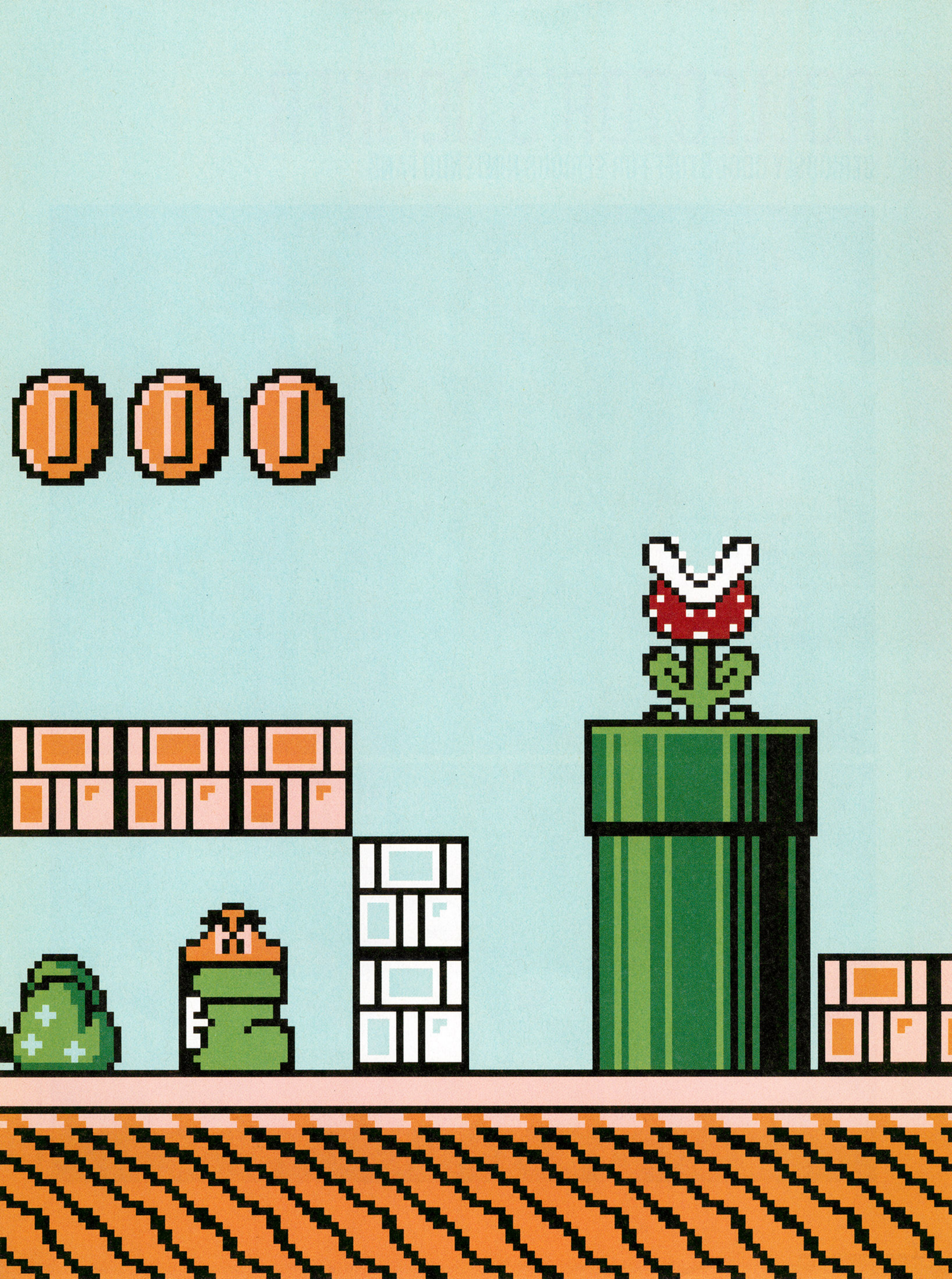
KURIBO'S SHOE

SUPER MARIO BROS. 3, NES, 1990

"Best Goomba-stomping ever? When Mario flattened a bunch of the little boogers with a giant green boot that he jacked from one of them, Grand Theft Auto–style."

—CHRIS S.





COLLECTOR'S CORNER

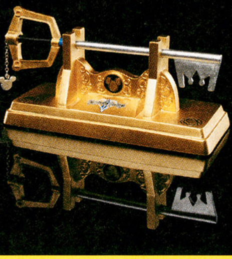
SERIOUSLY COOL STUFF FOR SERIOUS NINTENDO FANS

Rated X

These high-end Mega Man X action figures from Bandai/Bluefin are hard to find and a little on the pricey side, but totally worth it with their superarticulate bodies and interchangeable hands and faces. The shiny version was a San Diego Comic-Con exclusive.

Looks Good on Paper

This Kingdom Hearts Keyblade paperweight from Monogram is nice and hefty, and even better, you can remove the Keyblade and swing it around while making swishy noises.



The Gang's All Here

Each toy in this Super Mario figurine collection from Banpresto ranges from four to five inches and is sold separately. Is it just us, or does Yoshi seem sad that he's the only one without a hat or a fungus fro?

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PATRICK KAWAHARA

Wii Millionaire's Club

EVERYBODY KNOWS that the Wii console is a pop-culture phenomenon, but it's still shocking to learn just how many copies of its biggest games have found their way into players' homes. As you peruse the following US sales figures from the industry-tracking NPD group, which are fresh as of late August 2011, consider these points of interest: a whopping 42 Wii games have sold over a million copies; 19 titles are multimillion sellers; and 8 have topped the five-million mark. (The original Wii Sports isn't listed because it was bundled with the system.) People have purchased more than 13 million Wii Balance Board accessories. And people who think that owners of Nintendo systems buy only Nintendo games should note that third-party titles make up slightly more than half of this list. —**CHRIS S.**

THE TOP TEN

13.04
MILLION

1 WII PLAY WITH WII REMOTE CONTROLLER

10.64
MILLION

2 MARIO KART WITH WII WHEEL ACCESSORY

8.36
MILLION

3 NEW SUPER MARIO BROS. WII

8.15
MILLION

4 WII FIT WITH BALANCE BOARD ACCESSORY

6.05
MILLION

5 WII SPORTS RESORT WITH WII MOTIONPLUS ACCESSORY

5.35
MILLION

6 WII FIT PLUS WITH BALANCE BOARD ACCESSORY

5.28
MILLION

7 SUPER SMASH BROS. BRAWL

5.09
MILLION

8 JUST DANCE 2

4.38
MILLION

9 SUPER MARIO GALAXY

3.47
MILLION

10 LINK'S CROSSBOW TRAINING WITH ZAPPER ACCESSORY

THE REST

RANK	TITLE	MILLIONS
11	Mario Party 8	3.47
12	The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess	2.82
13	Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock	2.76
14	Just Dance	2.71
15	LEGO Star Wars: The Complete Saga	2.48
16	Super Mario Galaxy 2	2.4
17	Donkey Kong Country Returns	2.35
18	Mario and Sonic at the Olympic Games	2.25
19	Carnival Games	2.12
20	Michael Jackson: The Experience	1.88
21	Game Party	1.78
22	Wii Fit Plus (standalone software)	1.71
23	EA Sports Active Bundle	1.56
24	Disney Epic Mickey	1.52
25	Zumba Fitness: Join The Party	1.42
26	Deca Sports	1.35
27	Mario and Sonic at the Olympic Winter Games	1.34
28	Rayman Raving Rabbids	1.28
29	Super Paper Mario	1.27
30	LEGO Batman	1.17
31	Wii Music	1.16
32	Mario Super Sluggers	1.13
33	Cooking Mama: Cook Off	1.08
34	LEGO Indiana Jones: The Original Adventures	1.08
35	Animal Crossing: City Folk	1.06
36	Wipeout: The Game	1.06
37	Star Wars: The Force Unleashed	1.06
38	Resident Evil 4 Wii Edition	1.05
39	Guitar Hero World Tour with Band Kit	1.02
40	uDraw Studio with uDraw Tablet	1.02
41	Rock Band Special Edition Bundle	1.01
42	Call of Duty: World at War	1.01

One Ring, Two Generations, Three Dimensions

WWE All Stars heads to Nintendo 3DS.

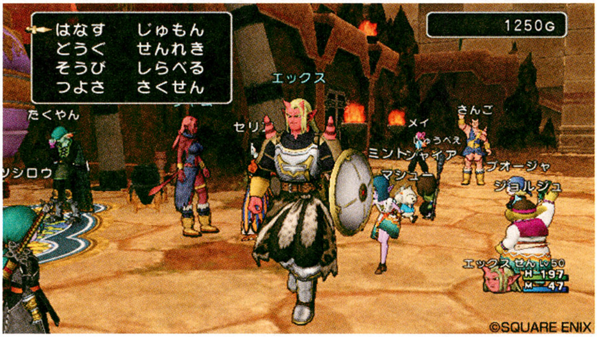
EARLIER THIS YEAR, wrestling fans got to pit modern-day WWE superstars against grappling legends of the past in WWE All Stars for Wii. Soon they'll be able to do it all over again—with new content and in 3D—when the game comes to the Nintendo 3DS handheld. Like its console counterpart, the N3DS version of WWE All Stars features arcade-style action with exaggerated character designs and over-the-top moves, but it includes 13 playable characters (Chris Jericho, the Big Bossman, Dusty Rhodes, and "The Million-Dollar Man" Ted DiBiase among them) not found in the Wii edition. The game also adds two new modes: Gauntlet (in which you face every character on the roster) and Score Scramble (in which you're challenged to earn a specific point total). THQ will release the game on November 22 (which is, not coincidentally, also the release date for WWE '12 on Wii). **—CHRIS H.**

HULK HOGAN
VS
JOHN CENA
BIGGEST SUPERSTAR

A Quest of Millions

NEWS *from* JAPAN

Dragon Quest X is headed to Japanese Wii and Wii U systems in the form of a massively multiplayer online adventure.



©SQUARE ENIX

WAY BACK IN 2008, Dragon Quest creator Yuji Horii promised that the tenth installment of the venerable series would come to the Wii console, but the nearly three years of silence that followed left fans wondering. At a Dragon Quest conference held in Japan on September 5th, Horii finally delivered on the promise with an official unveiling that was packed with surprises. Titled Dragon Quest X Online: Awakening of the Five Tribes, the game will be a large-scale online RPG along the lines of Final Fantasy XI and World of Warcraft. Perhaps even more surprising, its 2012 debut on Wii will be followed by the release of an enhanced version for Wii U. As of yet, neither version has been announced for a US release.

Whether questing online with a party of friends or going it solo with AI-controlled comrades, the world of Dragon Quest X Online will be constantly shaped by the actions of other players, and an Internet connection (and possibly a monthly fee) will be required to play. While the last two chapters of the series were developed by Level-5, Square Enix will be handling the development of Dragon Quest X internally, and focusing its efforts on making the often-daunting MMORPG genre as accessible as possible. The shift to an online world has proven controversial with fans, but Horii was quick to promise that the series had not forgotten its roots. "Online RPGs may have a reputation for weak stories," he noted, "but that will not be the case with Dragon Quest X." **—CASEY L.**

Q

HOW MANY COLORS DOES YOSHI™ COME IN?

Q

WHICH NINTENDO HERO HAS KIDS?

Q

HOW MANY TIMES HAS BOWSER KIDNAPPED PRINCESS PEACH™?

Q

WHO HAS A STARSHIP-PILOTING PIG AS AN ARCHENEMY?

Q

GOOMBAS: MUSHROOMS OR CHESTNUTS?

WHY DOES MARIO™ WEAR GLOVES?

Answers

Q

WHY IS MEGA MAN BLUE?

Q

WHY DOES FOX McCLOUD WEAR A RED SCARF?

Q

WHICH LEGEND OF ZELDA GAME DID ZELDA™ NOT APPEAR IN?

Q

WHAT'S UP WITH TINGLE?

Q

WHICH VIDEO GAME ICON HAS LOST WEIGHT?

Q

WHAT DOES THE WA IN WALUIGI™ MEAN?

GAME FORECAST

READERS' MOST WANTED

Vote for your favorites at
www.nintendopower.com/polls

Wii

1. The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword
2. Mario Party 9
3. Rayman Origins
4. Mario & Sonic at the London 2012 Olympic Games
5. Rhythm Heaven

NINTENDO DS

1. LEGO Harry Potter: Years 5-7
2. Shin Megami Tensei: Devil Survivor 2
3. Super Fossil Fighters
4. Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3—Defiance
5. Bejeweled 3

NINTENDO 3DS

1. Super Mario 3D Land
2. Mario Kart 7
3. Paper Mario*
4. Luigi's Mansion 2
5. Kid Icarus: Uprising

Wii

The Adventures of Tintin: The Game	Ubisoft	12/11
Back to the Future: The Game	Telltale	10/11
The Black Eyed Peas Experience	Ubisoft	11/11
Cabela's Survival: Shadows of Katmai	Activision	11/11
Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3	Activision	11/11
Cartoon Network Punch Time Explosion	Crave	HOL 11
Centipede: Infestation	Atari	11/11
Champion Jockey: G1 Jockey & Gallop Racer	Tecmo Koei	10/11
Country Dance 2	GameMill	11/11
Disney Universe	Disney	10/11
DreamWorks Super Star Kartz	Activision	HOL 11
Family Feud 2012*	Ubisoft	11/11
Family Game Night 4: The Game Show	Electronic Arts	10/11
Family Game Night Fun Pack	Electronic Arts	10/11
Fishing Resort	Xseed	FALL 11
Fortune Street	Nintendo	HOL 11
Generator Rex: Agent of Providence	Activision	10/11
Happy Feet Two: The Videogame	Warner Bros.	11/11
Jaws: Ultimate Predator	Majesco	11/11
Jimmie Johnson's Anything with an Engine	Autumn	10/11
Just Dance Kids 2	Ubisoft	10/11
Karaoke Revolution Glee: Volume 3	Konami	11/11
The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword	Nintendo	11/11
LEGO Harry Potter: Years 5-7	Warner Bros.	11/11
Mario Party 9	Nintendo	TBA
Mario & Sonic at the London 2012 Olympic Games	Sega	11/11
Marvel Super Hero Squad: Comic Combat	THQ	11/11
Monopoly Collection	Electronic Arts	10/11
NCIS	Ubisoft	11/11
Need for Speed: The Run	Electronic Arts	11/11
Nickelodeon Dance	2K Play	11/11
Power Rangers Samurai	Namco Bandai	11/11
The Price is Right Decades	Ubisoft	11/11
Pyroblazer	TBA	TBA
Rayman Origins	Ubisoft	11/11
Rhythm Heaven	Nintendo	TBA
Skylanders: Spyro's Adventure	Activision	10/11
Trivial Pursuit: Bet You Know It	Electronic Arts	10/11
Wipeout 2	Activision	HOL 11
WWE '12	THQ	11/11
Zumba Fitness 2	Majesco	11/11

Wii U

Aliens: Colonial Marines	Sega	TBA
Batman: Arkham City	Warner Bros.	TBA
Battlefield 3	Electronic Arts	TBA
Darksiders II	THQ	TBA
Killer Freaks from Outer Space	Ubisoft	TBA
LEGO City Stories	Nintendo	TBA
Metro: Last Light	THQ	TBA
Ninja Gaiden III: Razor's Edge	Tecmo Koei	TBA
Pikmin*	Nintendo	TBA
Super Smash Bros.*	Nintendo	TBA
Tekken*	Namco Bandai	TBA
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon Online	Ubisoft	TBA

NINTENDO DS

Bakugan: Rise of the Resistance	Activision	HOL 11
Bejeweled 3	PopCap	HOL 11
Beyblade Metal Masters	Konami	11/11
Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3—Defiance	Activision	11/11
Doodle Hex	TBA	TBA
Dora and Kai-Lan's Pet Shelter	2K Play	11/11
DreamWorks Super Star Kartz	Activision	HOL 11
Generator Rex: Agent of Providence	Activision	10/11
Ghostwire: Link to the Paranormal	TBA	TBA
Happy Feet Two: The Videogame	Warner Bros.	11/11
LEGO Harry Potter: Years 5-7	Warner Bros.	11/11
Max & the Magic Marker	Easy	HOL 11
Moshi Monsters: Moshling Zoo	Activision	FALL 11
Moxie Girlz	GameMill	11/11
Pirate Battle	Orbital Media	TBA
Power Rangers Samurai	Namco Bandai	11/11
Pillow Pets	GameMill	11/11
Shin Megami Tensei: Devil Survivor 2	Atlus	WIN 12
Squinkies 2: Adventure Mall Surprize!	Activision	HOL 11
Super Fossil Fighters	Nintendo	HOL 11
Team Umizoomi	2K Play	11/11
ThinkSMART Naraba: The Labyrinth of Light	Mentor	10/11
ThinkSMART Naraba: The Mysterious Palace	Mentor	10/11
Wappy Dog	Activision	11/11
Wipeout 2	Activision	HOL 11
ZhuZhu Babies	Activision	FALL 11
Zoobles	Activision	11/11

NINTENDO 3DS

Ace Combat 3D	Namco Bandai	WIN 11
The Adventures of Tintin: The Game	Ubisoft	12/11
Animal Crossing*	Nintendo	TBA
Ben 10 Galactic Racing	D3Publisher	10/11
BloodRayne: The Shroud	Majesco	TBA
A Boy and His Blob	Majesco	TBA
Brunswick Pro Bowling	Crave	TBA
Captain America: Super Soldier	Sega	10/11
Carnival Games*	Take-Two	TBA
Cave Story 3D	NIS America	11/11
Centipede: Infestation	Atari	11/11
Chocobo Racing 3D*	Square Enix	TBA
Contra*	Konami	TBA
Cooking Mama 4: Kitchen Magic	Majesco	11/11
Crash-City GP	Rocket	TBA
Crush 3D	Sega	2/12
de Blob 2	THQ	TBA
Dragon Ball*	Namco Bandai	TBA
Dragon Quest*	Square Enix	TBA
DreamWorks Super Star Kartz	Activision	HOL 11
Dynasty Warriors*	Tecmo Koei	TBA
Etrian Odyssey*	Atlus	TBA
Farm*	Ubisoft	11/11
Final Fantasy*	Square Enix	TBA
Fractured Soul 3D	Ignition	2012
Generator Rex: Agent of Providence	Activision	10/11
Gundam*	Namco Bandai	TBA
Happy Feet Two: The Videogame	Warner Bros.	11/11
Heroes of Ruin	Square Enix	2012
Horses 3D	Ubisoft	10/11
Imagine Babyz 3D	Ubisoft	10/11
Imagine Fashion Designer	Ubisoft	10/11
James Noir's Hollywood Crimes	Ubisoft	11/11
Jaws: Ultimate Predator	Majesco	11/11
Kid Icarus: Uprising	Nintendo	TBA
Kingdom Hearts: Dream Drop Distance	Square Enix	TBA
LEGO City Stories	Nintendo	2012
LEGO Harry Potter: Years 5-7	Warner Bros.	11/11
Lion's Pride: Adventures in the Serengeti	Majesco	TBA
Lovely Lisa 3D	Tomy	TBA
Luigi's Mansion 2	Nintendo	2012
Mahjong Cub3D	Atlus	TBA
Mario & Sonic at the London 2012 Olympic Games	Sega	2/12
Mario Kart 7	Nintendo	12/11
Martha Stewart	Majesco	TBA
Metal Gear Solid: Snake Eater 3D	Konami	HOL 11
Michael Jackson The Experience	Ubisoft	10/11
Nano Assault	Majesco	11/11
Naruto Shippuden Action*	Tomy	TBA
NCIS*	Ubisoft	3/12
Need for Speed: The Run	Electronic Arts	11/11
Ninja Gaiden*	Tecmo Koei	TBA
Pac-Man Party 3D	Namco Bandai	11/11
Paper Mario*	Nintendo	TBA
Planet Crashers 3D	Ignition	2012
Pokémon Rumble Blast	Nintendo	10/11
Professor Layton and the Mask of Miracle*	Level-5	TBA
Puppies 3D	Ubisoft	10/11
Rayman Origins	Ubisoft	3/12
Raving Rabbids 5*	Ubisoft	11/11
Resident Evil: Revelations	Capcom	2012
Rhythm Thief & the Emperor's Treasure	Sega	2012
RollerCoaster Tycoon 3D	Atari	3/12
Shin Megami Tensei: Persona*	Atlus	TBA
Shinobi	Sega	11/11
The Sims 3 Pets	Electronic Arts	FALL 11
Skylanders: Spyro's Adventure	Activision	10/11
Sonic Generations	Sega	11/11
Sudoku Premier Edition	Majesco	TBA
Super Mario 3D Land	Nintendo	11/11
Super Robot*	Namco Bandai	TBA
Super Smash Bros.*	Nintendo	TBA
Tales of the Abyss	Namco Bandai	WIN 12
Tekken 3D Prime Edition	Namco Bandai	2012
VS-robo	Rocket	TBA
Wipeout 2	Activision	HOL 11
WonderWorld Amusement Park	Majesco	TBA
WWE All Stars	THQ	11/11
Zoo Resort	Ubisoft	10/11

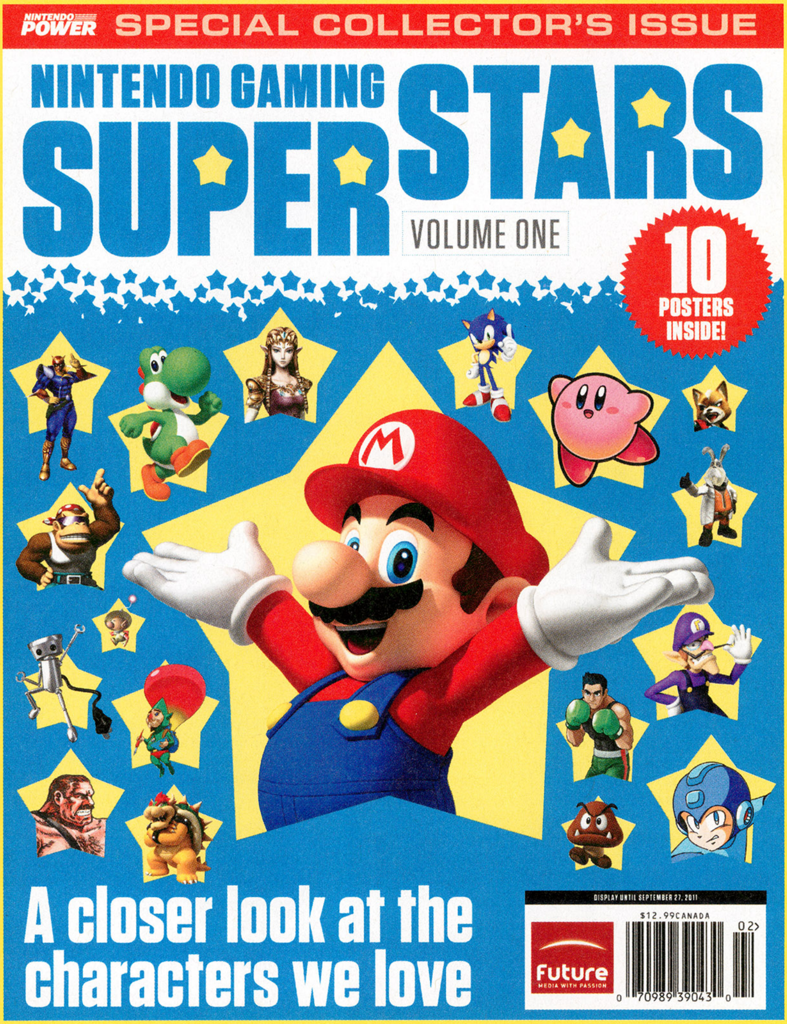
RED TEXT = GAMES ADDED THIS MONTH.

* TENTATIVE TITLE

NOTE: RELEASE DATES OFTEN CHANGE.

ALL NINTENDO 3DS SCREENSHOTS HAVE BEEN CAPTURED IN 2D MODE.

EVERYTHING YOU WANT (*AND DON'T WANT*) TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR FAVORITE CHARACTERS!



NINTENDO POWER SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S ISSUE

NINTENDO GAMING SUPERSTARS

VOLUME ONE

10 POSTERS INSIDE!

A closer look at the characters we love

DISPLAY UNTIL SEPTEMBER 27, 2011

$12.99CANADA

Future MEDIA WITH PASSION

02>

0 70989 39043 0

Order now at www.nintendopower.com/SPC

Future MEDIA WITH PASSION

Nintendo properties are trademarks of Nintendo.

© 2011 Future US, Inc.

DOWNLOAD

IN THIS SECTION

NINTENDO 3DS DOWNLOAD PREVIEW
NightSky

NINTENDO 3DS DOWNLOAD BONUS
Pokédex 3D

WIIWARE REVIEWS
FLIGHT CONTROL
KYOTOKEI
MONOCHROME RACING

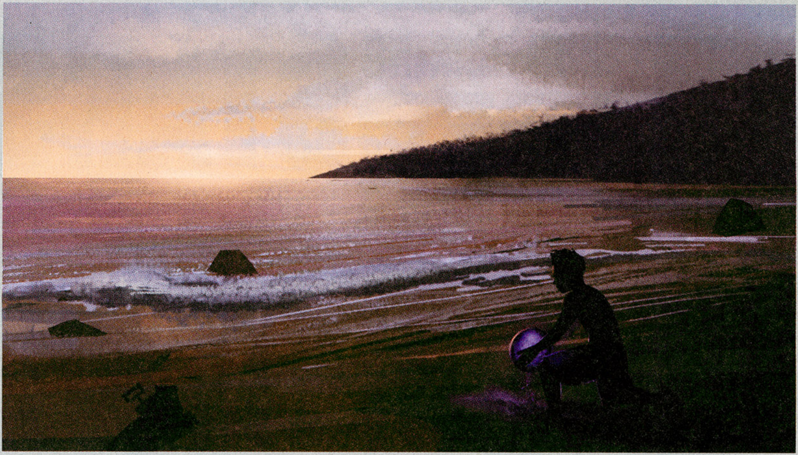
WII VIRTUAL CONSOLE REVIEWS
THE IGNITION FACTOR
SUPER ADVENTURE ISLAND II

DSIWARE REVIEWS
B-TEAM—EPISODE 2: ICE AND VENOM
BLOCKADO
BUILD-A-LOT
CRAZY HAMSTER
CUT THE ROPE
GO! GO! KOKOPOLO
MAGICAL WHIP: WIZARDS OF THE PHANTASMAL FOREST
ZOONIES—ESCAPE FROM MAKATU

N3DS VIRTUAL CONSOLE REVIEWS
AVENGING SPIRIT
GARGOYLE'S QUEST
MARIO'S PICROSS

N3DS 3D CLASSICS REVIEWS
3D CLASSICS: URBAN CHAMPION

N3DS DOWNLOAD REVIEWS
ZEN PINBALL 3D

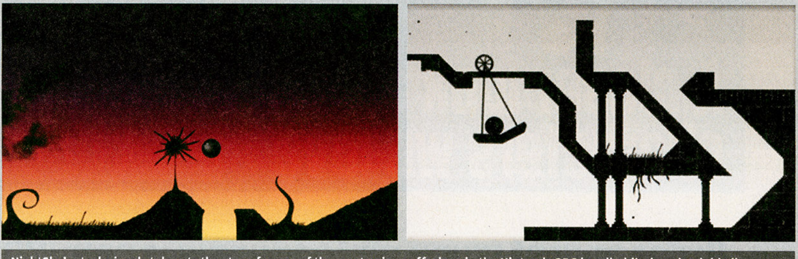


Take Back the Night

Experimental physics-based platform game NightSky rolls onto Nintendo 3DS.

MORE THAN TWO YEARS AGO, publisher Nicalis announced NightSky—a physics-driven, puzzle-oriented 2D platformer boasting a unique silhouette aesthetic—for WiiWare. (You can read all about it Nintendo Power Vol. 247.) The game looked great and was a blast to play, even in early form. The bad news is that the fate of the WiiWare version is still up in the air; the good news is that the game is headed to the Nintendo eShop for download on the Nintendo 3DS handheld.

NightSky isn't exactly heavy on plot. There's a backstory about the discovery of a magically glowing sphere on a beach, but all that really matters is that you end up guiding said sphere through level after dreamlike level filled with challenging

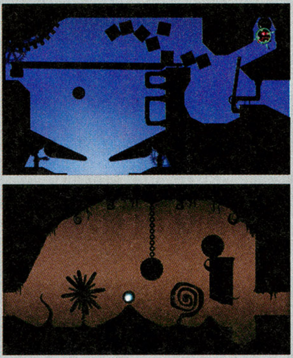


NightSky's stark visual style sets the stage for one of the most unique offerings in the Nintendo 3DS handheld's downloadable lineup.

obstacles and stylish visuals. Silhouetted graphics aren't anything new (a similar style was used in some levels of Donkey Kong Country Returns), but it helps establish a suitably mysterious mood, especially when you find yourself rolling past glowing-eyed animals, ominous machinery, or the remnants of abandoned vehicles.

The gameplay is simple enough in the early goings—you push left or right to make the sphere spin across the landscape, including up ramps and over hills—but things quickly become more complex. Depending on the level you'll get to use various special powers, including superspeed, increased friction (for sticking to surfaces), and inverse gravity, each of which is available with the press of a button.

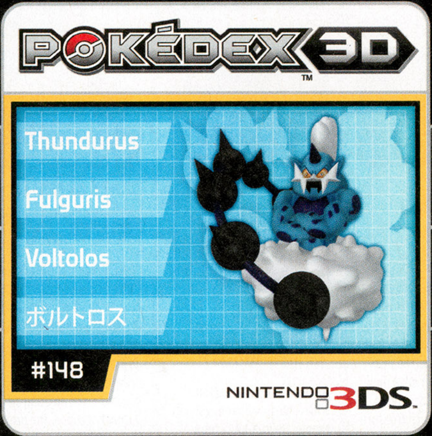
Furthermore, you'll have to make smart use of the levels themselves. You'll knock over platforms to create bridges, ride moving carts, race through corkscrew loops, push boxes and cylinders to fill gaps, launch from seesaws, and more. You'll even occasionally encounter pinball-style flippers that you can use to propel the sphere, and interactive machines that you can trigger by pressing the A Button. As the game progresses, the tricks for getting through the stages become increasingly complicated—for example, you may have to roll into a notched crate to make it start swinging, then cause a platform to fall so the edge of it hooks into the notch and creates a ramp that you can use to reach the next area. With 11 stages, each containing dozens of rooms, NightSky seems to have plenty of variety and challenge.



If all goes according to Nicalis's plan, development of the N3DS version of NightSky should be complete in a few months. Though it's taken a long time for the game to land on a Nintendo system, our experience so far indicates that it will be worth the wait. —**CHRIS H.**

Call Down the Thunder

Add Thundurus to your Pokédex 3D and learn how to unlock four extra features!



FREE via the Nintendo eShop!

View with the *Pokédex 3D* application.

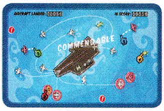
© 2011 Pokémon/Nintendo.

CONTINUING ON WITH our solemn duty to help players fill out their Pokédex 3D, this month we bring you the Pokémon AR Marker for Thundurus. As with last month's Tornadus offering, scanning the Pokémon AR Marker will make it possible to receive Thundurus over SpotPass, which is the only way to register it on your own (the only other option is to get Thundurus from a friend who has it already).

In other Pokédex 3D news, a new update to the application will unlock four previously hidden features for everyone to enjoy: the Pause button (which pauses a Pokémon in the middle of performing an action so you can get a better view of it while in the Pokédex), the Note button (which plays a Pokémon's cry while in the AR Viewer), the Stopwatch button (which freezes a Pokémon's animation in the AR Viewer to help you get a good picture), and the AR Viewer Settings menu. Before, these features were available to only those who collected a certain number of in-game stickers. To get the update, simply enter the Pokédex 3D settings menu on or after October 3 and select Update (you'll need a WiFi connection). —**CHRIS S.**

EVALUATION STATION

WiiWARE



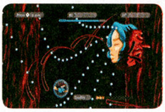
FLIGHT CONTROL

PUBLISHER: FIREMINT
GENRE: STRATEGY
PRICE: 500 POINTS

Some handheld gamers might fondly remember Flight Control, which was released on DSiWare early last year. It's a simple concept—you direct aircraft to runways by drawing paths, this time with the reticle of the Wii Remote. Unfortunately, the sluggish point-and-click controls are often your demise because avoiding crashes demands quick responses. Managing the fleet is easier when you cooperate with a friend or two, but playing alone just leaves you yearning for a touch screen. —CODY M.

Hmmm...

WiiWARE



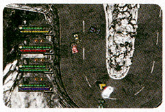
KYOTOKEI

PUBLISHER: MICROFORUM
GENRE: SHOOTER
PRICE: 500 POINTS

Taking a page directly from Treasure's fantastic Ikaruga, Kyotokei is a side-scrolling shooter in which you can switch between red and blue polarities so you can absorb like-colored bullets and inflict more damage on opposite-colored enemies. True, it's not exactly original, but it elevates this game beyond being a mere by-the-numbers shooter. The art and music aren't anything special and the difficulty is pretty severe, but Kyotokei is nonetheless worthwhile if you're a shooter fan. —CHRIS H.

Recommended

WiiWARE



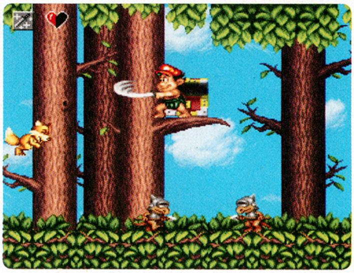
MONOCHROME RACING

PUBLISHER: NORDCURRENT
GENRE: RACING
PRICE: 500 POINTS

Ironically, one of Monochrome Racing's biggest downfalls is also its defining feature. As the game's title implies, each of the 85 courses is dominated by a dreary gray color palette. The other major problem with the game is its brevity. It takes no more than 30 seconds to finish a single race, and the entire affair took me less than two hours to beat. Though less of an issue, the controls also felt too loose and unresponsive for my liking. —KENNY M.

Grumble Grumble

Wii VIRTUAL CONSOLE



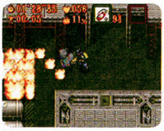
SUPER ADVENTURE ISLAND II

PLATFORM: SUPER NES **ORIGINALLY RELEASED:** 1994 **PUBLISHER:** HUDSON
GENRE: ADVENTURE **PRICE:** 800 POINTS

The first Super Adventure Island was a pure platformer with hard-as-nails gameplay, but Super Adventure Island II follows a different path—it's a nonlinear action-RPG that takes a few cues from the Zelda series. Admittedly, Super Adventure Island II doesn't have the stylish visuals or rockin' soundtrack of its predecessor, but on the whole it's a more robust experience (and you don't need superhuman gaming skills to play it). What the game lacks in challenge it makes up for with fluid controls, loads of exploration, excellent level design, and a variety of cool weapons, armor, items, and spells. This one's well worth checking out. —CHRIS H.

Recommended

Wii VIRTUAL CONSOLE



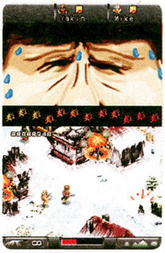
THE IGNITION FACTOR

PLATFORM: SUPER NES
ORIGINALLY RELEASED: 1995
PUBLISHER: JALECO
GENRE: ACTION
PRICE: 800 POINTS

The Ignition Factor immediately earns some points thanks to its awesome firefighting premise. The semi-realistic take on the subject adds strategy to the action—sure, you can bring loads of equipment into the burning building, but it will slow you down. Finding the right balance makes for a good time. The controls can be a little oversensitive (you're bound to run into a few flames), but you'll adjust. —PHIL T.

Recommended

DSiWARE



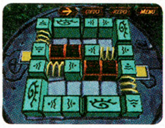
B TEAM—EPISODE 2: ICE AND VENOM

PUBLISHER: SUBDUED SOFTWARE
GENRE: SHOOTER
PRICE: 800 POINTS/$7.99

B Team—Episode 2 is nearly identical to its predecessor (released in May) except for new levels. The destructible environments are cool, but the shooting is ho-hum and the fact that your heroes don't react when they take damage can lead to an abrupt Game Over. —CHRIS H.

Grumble Grumble

DSiWARE



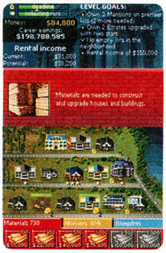
BLOCKADO—PUZZLE ISLAND

PUBLISHER: BITFIELD
GENRE: PUZZLE
PRICE: 500 POINTS/$4.99

Blockado casts players as a young lass stranded by way of shipwreck, working her way through a jungle littered with tile-based puzzles. The puzzles themselves involve moving blocks laterally to open paths through which treasure chests can be pushed to an exit tile. Although the production values are sound and the jungle-path metagame provides nice narrative context, the puzzle action is simply too shallow to sustain interest. —PATRICK C.

Hmmm...

DSiWARE



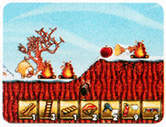
BUILD-A-LOT

PUBLISHER: MUMBOJUMBO
GENRE: ALTERNATIVE
PRICE: 800 POINTS/$7.99

A time-management game with a construction-developer theme, Build-a-lot takes a surprisingly by-the-numbers approach to its subject—you'll buy blueprints, sell lots, manage materials, and secure labor as you wrestle the market. While pricey, the "sim-lite" approach works quite well. —PATRICK C.

Recommended

DSiWARE



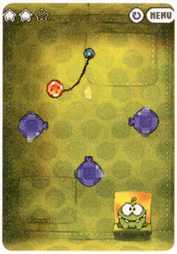
CRAZY HAMSTER

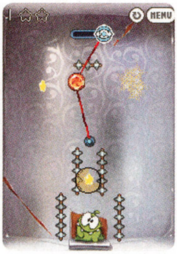
PUBLISHER: GAMELION STUDIOS
GENRE: STRATEGY
PRICE: 200 POINTS/$1.99

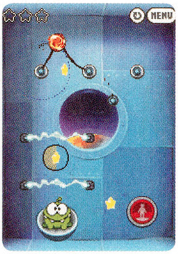
Sadly, Crazy Hamster is not a rodent-riding sequel to Crazy Taxi. Instead, it's somewhat like the classic strategy title Lemmings: you must use an assortment of tools to prevent a mindlessly romping hamster from meeting an untimely demise. The premise is entertaining, but there's generally only one way past any given obstacle, which makes the action a lot less interesting than it could be. Additionally, the game suffers from some extensive load times. —CHRIS H.

Hmmm...

DSiWARE







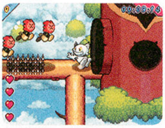
CUT THE ROPE

PUBLISHER: CHILLINGO **GENRE:** PUZZLE **PRICE:** TBD

Already successful on other portable devices, critically acclaimed puzzle game Cut the Rope has been lassoed by DSiWare. Om Nom, your freshly arrived (and undeniably adorable) creature, demands that you feed it candy, but only at your mental expense. To serve your varmint, you position the handheld sideways, and then use the stylus to strategically cut ropes that the treats hang from. It's a simple concept, and the game's short-but-sweet level designs will keep you tethered throughout the first 100 levels (at least). You're obstructed by bubbles, spikes, and spiders along the way, but they aren't overly frustrating; the game's difficulty curve strikes an excellent balance between challenge and satisfaction. A few sections are luck-based, however, and sometimes it's easy to cut a rope and pop a bubble simultaneously when you wanted only one or the other. But these are minor complaints, and shouldn't discourage you from feeding the monster. —**CODY M.**

Recommended

DSiWARE



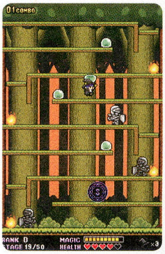
GO! GO! KOKOPOLO

PUBLISHER: ROOM 4 GAMES
GENRE: ACTION
PRICE: 800 POINTS/$7.99

Who'd have thought a game based on running away from enemies would be fun? Go! Go! Kokopolo proves it can be. The object of the game is to provoke enemies into chasing you so they can be led to their demise, but memorization, improvisation, and quick reflexes are required to succeed. This game offers excellent level design, varied enemies, fun boss battles, and a perfect difficulty curve that steadily ups the challenge with each stage. —**KENNY M.**

Recommended

DSiWARE



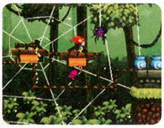
MAGICAL WHIP: WIZARDS OF THE PHANTASMAL FOREST

PUBLISHER: AGETEC
GENRE: ACTION
PRICE: 200 POINTS/$1.99

Reminiscent of classics like Bubble Bobble, Magical Whip offers simple, straightforward action in which you defeat enemies with—what else?—your magical whip. It's not very deep, but it's bursting with old-school charm. —**CHRIS H.**

Hmmm...

DSiWARE



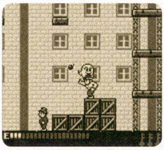
ZOONIES—ESCAPE FROM MAKATU

PUBLISHER: KILOO
GENRE: ACTION
PRICE: 500 POINTS/$4.99

Zoonies tasks players with clearing a path and otherwise looking out for young Leo (the lion, naturally) as he marches inexorably rightward through jungle-themed platform levels. Using the stylus, players will slide blocks, flip switches, thwart predators, control platforms, etc. as they negate treacherous terrain for their young charge. While the premise is atypical and the interactivity varied, monotony can creep in during long play sessions. —**PATRICK C.**

Hmmm...

N3DS VIRTUAL CONSOLE



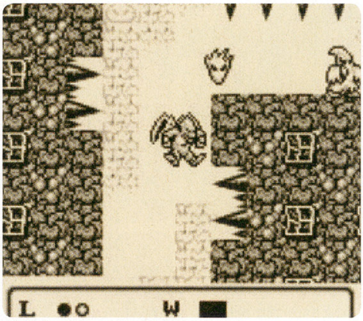
AVENGING SPIRIT

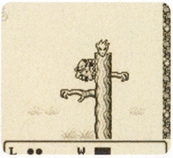
PLATFORM: GAME BOY
ORIGINALLY RELEASED: 1992
PUBLISHER: JALECO
GENRE: PLATFORMER
PRICE: $2.99

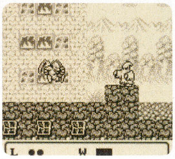
As a platformer, Avenging Spirit is pretty standard: you jump on ledges, shoot enemies, and so on. What sets the game apart from the rest is the ghostly main character's ability to possess foes, use their individual powers, and move on to a new host body when the bad guy's energy runs out. The different skills at your disposal add variety and replay value. Don't overlook this obscure oldie. —**PHIL T.**

Recommended

N3DS VIRTUAL CONSOLE







GARGOYLE'S QUEST

PLATFORM: GAME BOY **ORIGINALLY RELEASED:** 1990 **PUBLISHER:** CAPCOM **GENRE:** ADVENTURE **PRICE:** $3.99

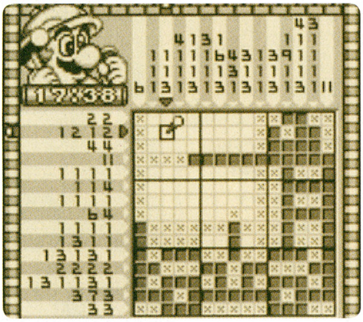
Gargoyle's Quest has an odd background. It's a spin-off of Capcom's popular Ghosts 'n Goblins series that has you controlling one of that franchise's more notable enemy characters. Not only that, but the gameplay is more in line with Zelda II: The Adventure of Link than the series from which Gargoyle's Quest is derived. Despite its untraditional origins, it's a pretty fantastic game. The control and level design are just as good as you would expect from Capcom during the 8-bit era, and the adventure elements (including map exploration, towns, and upgradable skills) keep things interesting. The only problems with the game are that it's a bit short and the difficulty level is somewhat low. —**PHIL T.**

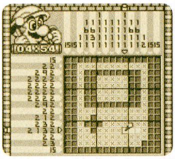
Recommended

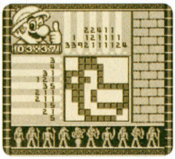
EVALUATION STATION

Wii DOWNLOAD
NINTENDO DSi DOWNLOAD
NINTENDO 3DS DOWNLOAD

N3DS VIRTUAL CONSOLE

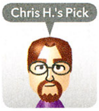






MARIO'S PICROSS

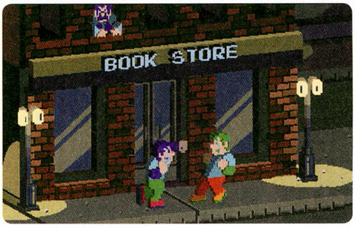
PLATFORM: GAME BOY **ORIGINALLY RELEASED:** 1995 **PUBLISHER:** NINTENDO **GENRE:** PUZZLE **PRICE:** $3.99



Back in 1995 little Chris Hoffman was confused by Mario's Picross. I didn't know what the heck a "Picross" was, I didn't understand what the deal was with all the grids and numbers, and I wasn't sure why Mario was wearing a hard hat. I'm still not entirely sure about the hat, but the rest now makes perfect sense: Mario's Picross is an incredibly addictive gem of a puzzle game in which you use numerical clues to reveal simple pictures. The controls can be slightly unresponsive at times, but fortunately this isn't a game that relies on quick reflexes. Learn from my mistake and don't let this one pass you by.

Recommended

N3DS 3D CLASSIC



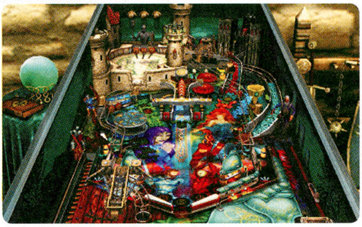
3D CLASSICS: URBAN CHAMPION

PLATFORM: NES **ORIGINALLY RELEASED:** 1986 **PUBLISHER:** NINTENDO **GENRE:** FIGHTING **PRICE:** $4.99

Even when it was first released more than 25 years ago, Urban Champion wasn't very good. It's one of the most basic games that was ever available for the NES; you can punch high or low, weak or strong, and you can walk and dodge—that's pretty much it. The fact that the loser falls into a sewer while the winner does a funny dance is amusing for a round or two, but the animation is so choppy, the controls are so stiff, and the action is so limited that it won't hold your interest for long. Not surprisingly, the addition of stereoscopic 3D does nothing to alleviate these problems. There are a lot of games that would be better suited to the 3D Classics treatment than Urban Champion. —CHRIS H.

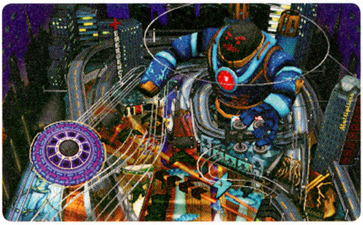
Grumble Grumble

N3DS DOWNLOAD



ZEN PINBALL 3D

PUBLISHER: ZEN STUDIOS **GENRE:** PINBALL **PRICE:** TBD



Though not based on real-life pinball games, Zen Pinball delivers an excellent virtual representation of this oft-overlooked pastime. All four tables included here are full of interesting layouts and gimmicks, and there's no shortage of challenge. The physics are spot-on, the graphics are extremely impressive (although some of the details get lost at a distance), the music is appealing, and the stereoscopic 3D visuals help create a convincingly authentic pinball experience. Even if you're not a pinball pro, Zen Pinball eases you into the action with adjustable difficulty settings and in-game guides that conveniently explain the ins and outs of each table, while "awards" give you objectives to accomplish other than just earning a high score. Of course, the game features the annoyances of real pinball as well, such as the occasions when you launch the ball only for it to immediately and unavoidably go down a drain, but that's an easier pill to swallow when you aren't pumping in quarters for each play. —CHRIS H.

Recommended

ALSO AVAILABLE

BREAKFAST MENU
(7am to 11am)
Ham and Eggs
Milk and Cereal
Cheese and Bread
Pancakes and Sausages
Toast
Juice
Coffee
spoon

School is back in session, and the Nintendo eShop and Nintendo DSi Shop have a few new releases that just might help you out: **Play & Learn Spanish** (800 Points/$7.99) and **Calculator** (200 Points/$1.99).... Interested in learning about pottery but don't want to get your hands dirty? Then check out **Let's Create: Pottery** (500 Points/$4.99).... Other new DSiWare releases are slightly more traditional. **My Asian Farm** (200 Points/$1.99) is another simple farming game that can connect to other games in the My Farm series, and **Go Fetch! 2** (500 Points/$4.99) puts you in control of a puppy.

The Fury of Zoroark Has Been Unleashed!

The Pokémon Baccer World Cup.

As Ash and his friends journey to Crown City to join the crowds watching the Pokémon Baccer World Cup, mysterious forces are in motion that could bring untold misfortune to them all! What secrets does Zorua hide and why is the powerful Zoroark rampaging through the city?

Pokémon

ZOROARK

MASTER OF ILLUSIONS

DVD in stores September 20th, 2011!

$19.97 US / $19.98 CAN

Pokémon
ZOROARK
MASTER OF ILLUSIONS
The Fury of Zoroark Has Been Unleashed!

© 2011 Pokémon. © 1997-2010 Nintendo, Creatures, GAME FREAK, TV Tokyo, ShoPro, JR Kikaku.
© PIKACHU PROJECT 2010. Pokémon properties are trademarks of Nintendo.

www.vizkids.com www.viz.com ratings.viz.com

RATED A FOR ALL AGES

IN THIS SECTION

Wii PREVIEWS

BACK TO THE FUTURE: THE GAME pg.40
DISNEY UNIVERSE pg.44
FISHING RESORT pg.42
MARIO & SONIC AT THE LONDON 2012 OLYMPIC GAMES pg.36

DS PREVIEWS

WAPPY DOG pg.42

N3DS PREVIEWS

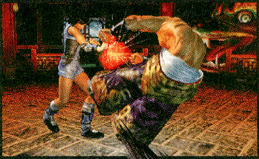
ACE COMBAT 3D pg.38
NANO ASSAULT pg.43
SHINOBI pg.46
TEKKEN 3D PRIME EDITION pg.34

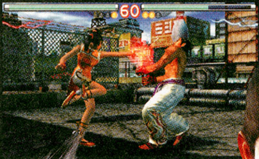
TEKKEN 3D PRIME EDITION

An android girl, a cyborg ex-cop, and a formerly old man enter a fighting tournament...

WITHIN ITS FIRST year of existence, the Nintendo 3DS system has become a haven for fighting games. Street Fighter, Dead or Alive, and BlazBlue have already made a mark on Nintendo's 3D handheld—now The King of Iron Fist Tournament is on its way. And unlike 2002's Tekken Advance for Game Boy Advance (the series's only other appearance on a Nintendo platform), Tekken 3D Prime Edition for N3DS seems to have everything a Tekken fan could want—and more.

Most importantly, Tekken 3D Prime Edition (why it's called that when there's only one edition of this handheld game is a mystery to us) plays like a Tekken game should. As director Katsuhiro Harada promised





THE KINGS AND QUEENS OF IRON FIST

To say the 40 competitors of Tekken 3D Prime Edition are an eclectic bunch is an understatement. With so many characters to choose from, though, you shouldn't have a hard time finding someone that suits your particular play style.

Alisa Bosconovitch
Anna Williams
Armor King
Asuka Kazama
Baek Doo San
Bob
Bruce Irvin
Bryan Fury
Christie Monteiro
Craig Marduk
Devil Jin
Eddy Gordo
Feng Wei
Ganryu
Heihachi Mishima
Hwoarang
Jack-6
Jin Kazama
Julia Chang
Kazuya Mishima
King
Kuma
Lars Alexandersson
Lee Chaolan
Lei Wulong
Leo Kliesen
Lili Rochefort
Ling Xiaoyu
Marshall Law
Miguel Caballero Rojo
Mokujin
Nina Williams
Paul Phoenix
Raven
Roger Jr.
Sergei Dragunov
Steve Fox
Wang Jinrei
Yoshimitsu
Zafina

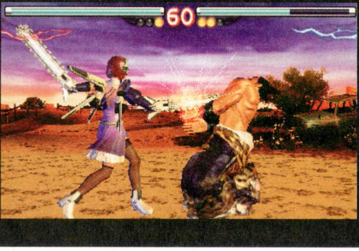
back at this year's E3, the game is locked at 60 frames per second, regardless of whether the 3D effect is activated. And because Tekken uses four buttons for attacks—a button each for left and right punches, as well as left and right kicks—the game is perfectly suited to the Nintendo 3DS hardware and its four face buttons. As soon as we picked up the new Tekken 3D Prime Edition demo, we were able to start kicking butt without much acclimation time. In fact, the only problem we had was trying to remember the moves of the demo's playable characters, which included series-hero-turned-villain Kazuya Mishima, schoolgirl Ling Xiaoyu, cyborg Bryan Fury, android Alisa Bosconovitch, and perennial villain Heihachi Mishima (who has somehow gotten a lot younger). In addition to these combatants, Tekken 3D Prime Edition will feature the entire roster of Tekken 6 (see the sidebar), with old Heihachi being replaced by young Heihachi.

We saw Special Survival, Battle, Practice, Tekken Cards (more on this later), Profile, and Options at the main menu, but the demo we got our hands on had only the Special Survival mode available for play. For this demo version of the game, we had one non-refilling life bar to get us through a series of four fights. The Special Survival mode in the retail release will, obviously, be much more fully featured, including a longer series of fights, five to six different courses to choose from, and bosses to face. Naturally, these bosses will have certain advantages: some might be damaged by juggle combos only, for example, and others might always be in Rage mode. (Introduced in Tekken 6, the attack-strengthening Rage mode is typically engaged when you're near death.) In Special Survival mode, you can acquire Tekken Cards, collectible cards that you can trade and battle with via StreetPass. (Essentially, the cards are similar to the figurines from Super Street Fighter IV: 3D Edition.) That's not the game's only wireless functionality, though; you can also compete in traditional head-to-head fights via local wireless and Wi-Fi.

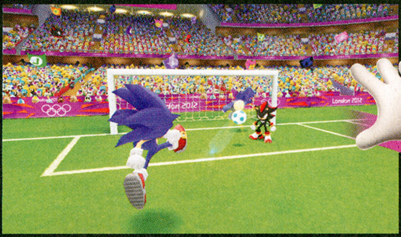
Just in case this isn't enough Tekken goodness for you, Namco Bandai is also including the CGI-animated film *Tekken: Blood Vengeance* with the game. Set between Tekken 5 and 6, *Blood Vengeance* will hopefully be able to get newbies up to speed on at least some of the Tekken characters. We can't attest to the movie's overall quality, but the trailer we saw during our demo seemed to make decent use of the Nintendo 3DS system's autostereoscopic screen.

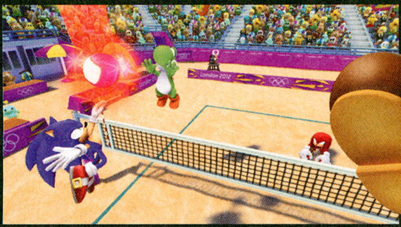
Given the limited roster and play modes we were offered, it's clear that Tekken 3D Prime Edition is still in its early development stages, but it's coming along nicely so far. The combat already feels solid, and the graphics are impressive with or without the 3D effect enabled. We can't wait to see how the rest of the game shapes up. —JUSTIN C.

N3DS
PUBLISHER: **NAMCO BANDAI**
DEVELOPER: **NAMCO BANDAI**
RELEASE: **EARLY 2012**



[Left] Yes, Alisa's arms turn into chainsaws. She's an android, so it kinda makes sense...right?





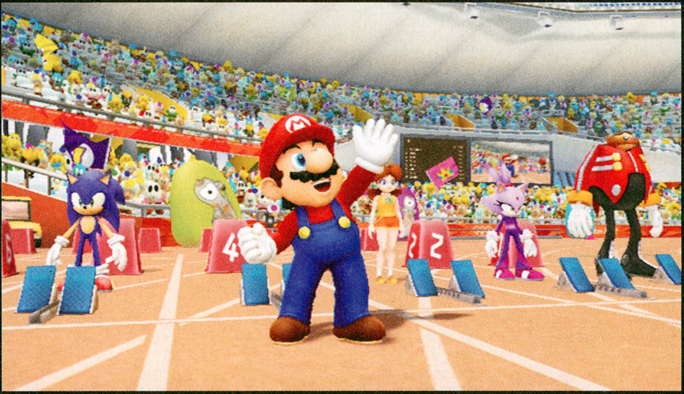
MARIO & SONIC AT THE LONDON 2012 OLYMPIC GAMES

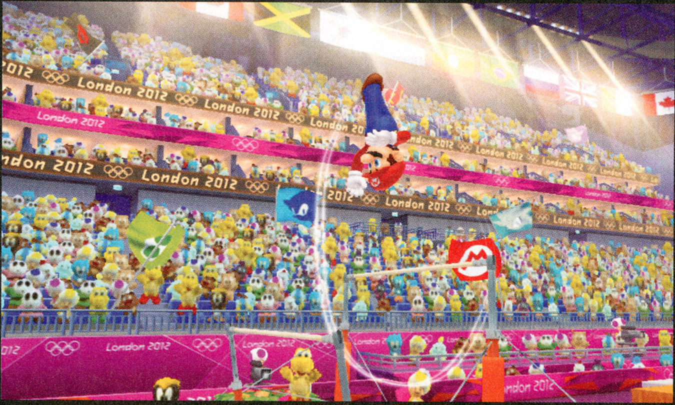
Gold coins. Gold rings. Gold medals.

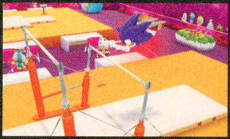
BEING AN OLYMPIC athlete is normally a lot of work. It takes time, effort, practice, dedication, and skill. Mix in hedgehogs, princesses, and plumbers, however, and you'll find that the Olympics are more like a party.

In fact, one of the primary modes in the Wii console version of Mario & Sonic at the London 2012 Olympic Games is called London Party. This mode enables you (and up to three other players) to take control of any of the game's 20 characters—ranging from Mario, Luigi, Princess Peach, Wario, Donkey Kong, and Bowser to Sonic, Tails, Knuckles, Amy, Metal Sonic, and Dr. Robotnik—and explore a top-down board game-style rendition of London. As you run around and encounter landmarks such as the London Eye and Tower Bridge, you'll meet nonplayable characters who trigger minigame challenges. The minigames are packed with variety—you may need to cooperatively hunt down a rogue Shy Guy or competitively count objects as they fly through the air—but they all promise fast-paced fun and they all reward the victors with the stickers needed to claim victory. If you think this doesn't sound very Olympic-oriented beyond the setting, well, you're right. Every couple of minutes, though, Big Ben tolls, activating one of the game's more than 20 athletic competitions, providing yet more opportunities to fill your sticker book.

A wide array of competitive sporting events, of course, is what Mario & Sonic at the London 2012 Olympic Games is really all about. Several of the events—including the 100-meter dash, hammer throw, javelin, hurdles, shooting, fencing, and table tennis—are returning from Mario & Sonic's previous summer-games experience, but with subtle refinements.







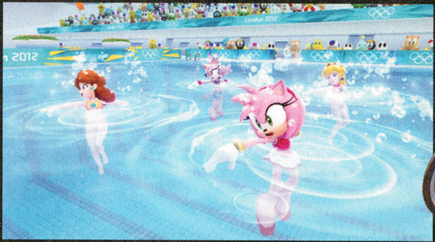
(Table tennis features flashier special moves and a greater sense of speed, for example.) Other events are new to this title, such as badminton, uneven bars, canoeing, equestrian competition (horseback riding), soccer, and beach volleyball.

As you'd expect, each event is built around intuitive pick-up-and-play controls that take advantage of the capabilities of the Wii Remote controller (and frequently the optional Nunchuk controller). In the uneven-bars gymnastics competition, you hold the B and Z Buttons to mimic the motion of grabbing a bar with two hands, then perform well-timed downward swipes with the Wii Remote and Nunchuk to build up speed. Once you've reached maximum velocity, you let go of B and Z to launch into the air, then press the buttons again to grab the bar as you descend. The tricky part comes at the end; you must swing the controllers to achieve a perfectly timed landing, then hold them overhead to strike a pose. Other events take a more traditional approach to controls; in soccer you move via the Control Pad or Control Stick, and use buttons to shoot, pass, slide, and change characters.

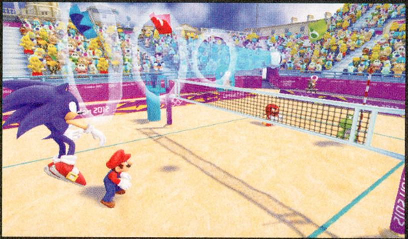
But for Sonic and Mario fans, the most enjoyable challenges might be the Dream Events. Like in previous Mario & Sonic Olympic titles, these events are inspired by real sports, yet are heavily infused with the sense of fantastic whimsy that the title characters are known for. In Dream Long Jump you bounce across clouds in a Mario-esque platformer, whereas in Dream Discus you'll ride a flying disc through an environment from the Sonic universe, collecting rings and smashing bad guys (and other players) as you proceed. Dream Equestrian is—pardon the pun—a horse of a different color. Inspired by Mario Kart, this event requires four players to cooperatively steer a horse-drawn Yoshi-egg-carrying cart down a track that a Magikoopa has seeded with hazards. You'll have to run across boost pads, execute well-timed jumps, and dodge flaming bales of hay to ensure that the eggs make it safely to their destination.

Though the real London Olympic Games don't begin until next summer, Wii owners will be able to go for the gold in mid November. A Nintendo 3DS version of the title—featuring exclusive modes and events—is also in the works, but it won't be available until February 2012. —**CHRIS H.**

Wii PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **SEGA**
RELEASE: **NOVEMBER 2011**



[Above] If Amy's synchronized swimming team doesn't win, you can bet that the judges will feel the wrath of her hammer.



Even if there are explosions all around you, it's important to stay on target.

ACE COMBAT 3D

Ace in the pocket

LIKE TEKKEN (see the preview on page 34), Ace Combat is a series that has been on a Nintendo platform only once before (with Ace Combat Advance for Game Boy Advance). Unlike Tekken, Ace Combat's foray was less than a critical success. Thankfully, Namco Bandai has a significantly more impressive game on the way for the Nintendo 3DS system: Ace Combat 3D.

Yes, this game features 3D visuals and they look good so far, but it's the way Ace Combat 3D plays that has us excited. The controls are easy to learn: you steer your plane with the Circle Pad, accelerate with R, brake with L, change your map by pressing up and down on the Control Pad, cycle targets with X, fire missiles with A, shoot guns with B, and swap weapons by pressing left and right on the Control Pad. This should feel somewhat familiar to those who have played an Ace Combat game before, but Ace Combat 3D adds some new features that amplify the intensity.

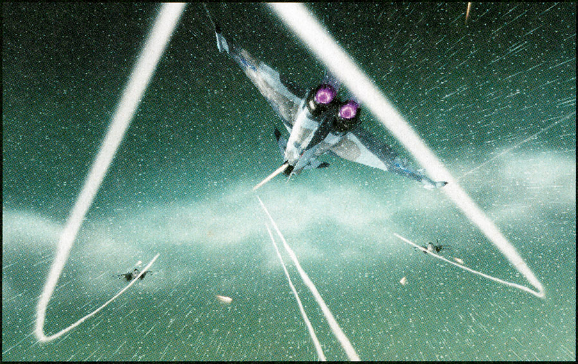
For instance, as you're locking onto an enemy aircraft, a yellow box appears over it on your display. Tapping Y at this point allows you to perform an attack maneuver. You see a little cut-scene as your fighter gets right up on your target's tail. Conversely, if a foe has a missile lock on you, you will see yellow arrows on your display. You just point the Circle Pad in the direction of one of those arrows and press Y to perform an evasion maneuver in which you barrel-roll out of the way of the oncoming missile. Also useful during combat is the high-G turn, wherein you brake and turn while flying at high speeds in order to turn around quickly. (It's almost like drifting in a Mario Kart game.)

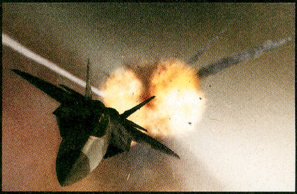
With a 33-mission-long Story mode, a Challenge mode, and a multitude of equipment, parts, paint schemes, and aircraft to unlock, Ace Combat 3D seems to be the aerial-combat title Nintendo-system owners have been hoping for. Fortunately, you won't have to wait *too* much longer; Ace Combat 3D is slated to be released by the end of this year. —**JUSTIN C.**

PUBLISHER: **NAMCO BANDAI**

N3DS DEVELOPER: **PROJECT ACES**

RELEASE: **WINTER 2011**





YOU FOUND THE OCARINA!

SWEET POTATO OCARINA $44.95
6 holes (2 thumbhole, octave +2), includes Songbook/Tutorial/Serenades, Lullabies, Minuets

DRAGONTOOTH OCARINA $99.95
12 Hole Ocarina with metallic lustre glaze.
Comes with display stand, Songbook Tutorial,
metal chain, Origin Myth with original songs

DRAGONTOOTH

SPEARHEAD OCARINA $19.95
6 Holes with 2 thumbholes (octave +3)
Comes as a beaded necklace
and Songbook/Tutorial

Plenty of other ocarina styles, songbooks, holsters, carrying cases, video tutorials and demos at www.songbirdocarina.com

SHIPPING INFO
Shipping & Handling $6 - $8 (1 - 2 weeks for delivery)
PRIORITY Shipping $12 -$14 (2-5 biz days for delivery)
We also ship FedEx for super fast delivery

Order via our Website or call Toll Free: 1-866-899-4046

Sweet Potato Ocarina

- **Easy To Play**
- **Ceramic Flute**
- **Songbook/Tutorial Included**
- **Minuets, Serenades, Requiems**
- **Handmade in U.S.A.**

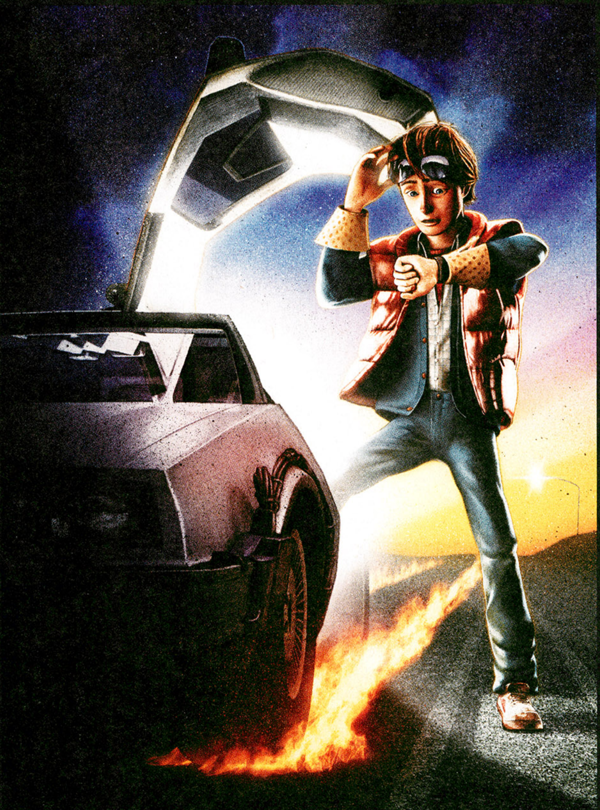
Songbird Ocarinas
2751 East 11th St. Los Angeles, CA 90023
www.songbirdocarina.com

Songbird Ocarinas is not affiliated with or endorsed by Nintendo of America, Inc.

BACK TO THE FUTURE: THE GAME

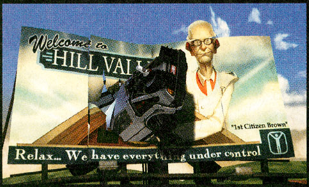
Marty and Doc's temporal travels come to Wii in a five-act adventure for the ages.

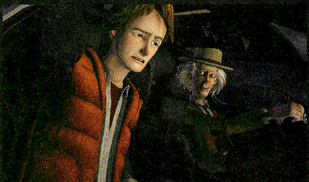
IT'S BEEN 26 YEARS since the original *Back to the Future* thrilled moviegoers, but Telltale Games is out to prove that it's never too late to give a classic the adventure-game treatment. The developer, known for its WiiWare offerings Strong Bad's Cool Game for Attractive People and Tales of Monkey Island, is releasing its five-episode Back to the Future: The Game—previously available only separately on other platforms—on Wii this fall.

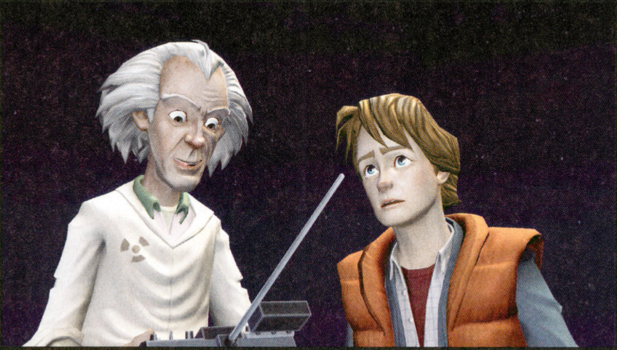


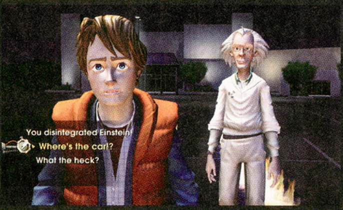
Across the chapters, the game weaves a new tale of time-traveling teen Marty McFly and his friend Doctor Emmett Brown that manages to tie in other characters from the three feature films—and even introduces some new ones. Bob Gale, the co-creator of the *Back to the Future* franchise, lent his expertise to the development process, and four different game directors are helming the episodes, including Secret of Monkey Island cowriter Dave Grossman. Both Marty and Doc Brown sport the likenesses of the actors who originally played them, Michael J. Fox and Christopher Lloyd, with Lloyd reprising his role for Doc's voice acting. Marty is voiced by AJ LoCascio, a Fox sound-alike, but Fox himself performs multiple characters in the fifth and final chapter of the game.

Telltale is going to great lengths to capture the look of the films while going with a more stylized approach. Somewhere between reality and a cartoon, what we've seen of it so far is undeniably *Back to the Future*. The plot is too; it









[Left] Say, that scene looks familiar.
[Below] What are you looking at, butthead?

begins much like the first film then takes a surprising turn in a new direction—and into a new time period. Telltale says that while the films saw Doc Brown working to help Marty with his time-travelling dilemma, the game puts the shoe on the other foot, with Marty out to rescue his missing friend.

Along the way, Marty will encounter some familiar faces, including his mom and dad, his girlfriend Jennifer, and bully Biff Tannen. Of course, there are new characters in this tale, as well. One of them is reporter (and sister of Marty's strict high-school principal) Edna Strickland. In keeping with series tradition, Marty will also come across a troublemaking Tannen ancestor—in this case, a mobster named Kid Tannen—and one of his own kin, his grandfather Artie, who's become prey to Biff's ne'er-do-well relative.

Players use the Wii Remote controller to guide Marty through important scenes, interacting with clues and other characters. Each scene not only helps unfold the story, but also is built around a clever puzzle that combines nearly everything—and everyone—in sight. Character interactions offer multiple dialog choices, with the aim of giving players options and even replayability. Should they get stuck, though, there's an in-game hint system on hand to gently poke and prod them in the right direction—if they choose to use it.

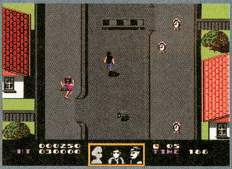
The game's story spans more than 50 years, from the 1980s to the 1930s, and explores the wild Prohibition-era side of its setting, Hill Valley, California. While not officially canon, the plot is based on material originally considered by Bob Gale and director Robert Zemeckis for the film *Back to the Future Part II*. Expect to visit several iconic locations, including Doc's house (home of the famous guitar amp from the first film), the Twin Pines Mall, and the clock-tower plaza, as well plenty of new locales.

Telltale can't say if Marty and Doc's video game adventures will continue past these five neatly packed episodes, making this one case in which time truly will tell. —RANDY N.

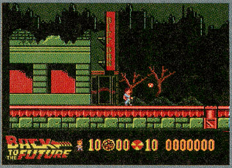
Wii PUBLISHER: **TELLTALE GAMES**
DEVELOPER: **TELLTALE GAMES**
RELEASE: **OCTOBER 2011**

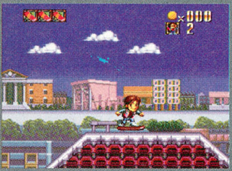
BACK IN TIME

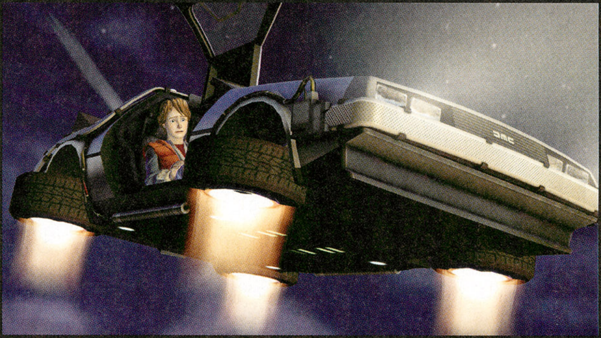
Back to the Future: The Game is the first modern-day title based on the movies, but it's definitely not the first Back to the Future console game ever. That honor goes to Back to the Future for the NES, released in 1989 by LJN.



It was followed in 1990 by Back to the Future Part II & III, also from LJN. Super Back to the Future II, from Toshiba EMI, was released in Japan for Super Famicom in 1993.







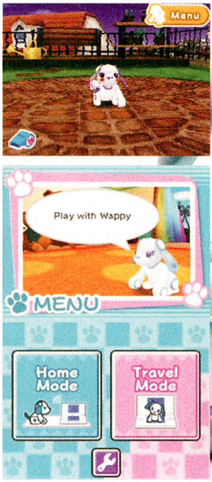
WAPPY DOG

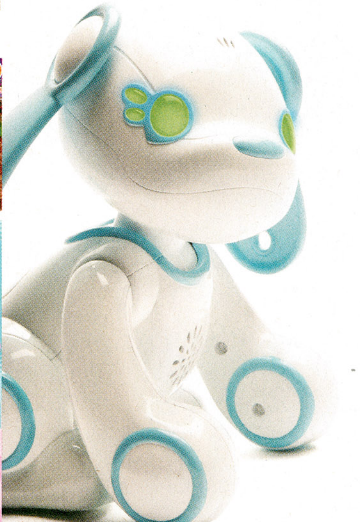
Wappy does what nintendogs don't.

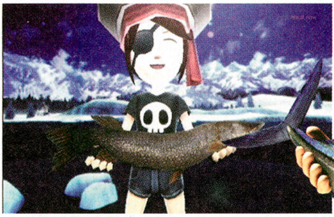
Is it a video game, a virtual pet, or a toy? Well, this cute robotic canine is actually all three rolled into one slobber-free package. First you have Home mode, in which you directly communicate with the Wappy Dog toy via codified sounds from your Nintendo DS. As you play minigames and chat virtually with your pup, he'll excitedly acknowledge you on both the tabletop and the handheld. There's also a Travel mode for playing the Nintendo DS without the toy (which is essentially a pet sim akin to nintendogs), and you can even interact without your game card by petting Wappy's sensors and pressing his buttons. But regardless of mode, Wappy will always remember your time together by automatically transferring his "heart" between the toy and the DS. Depending on how you care for him, Wappy can mature, change moods, and unlock lots of activities for both of you to enjoy. —CODY M.

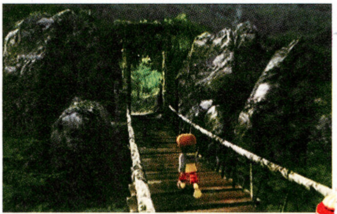
DS PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**
DEVELOPER: **SEGA TOYS**
RELEASE: **HOLIDAY 2011**

Wappy doesn't poop or pee, and he'll never hump your leg. Who needs a real dog?

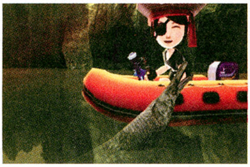


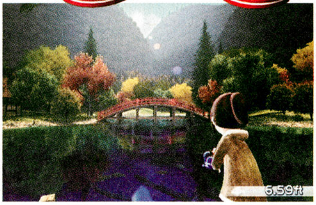






[Above] Penangkapan Island offers lots of places to explore and things to do.



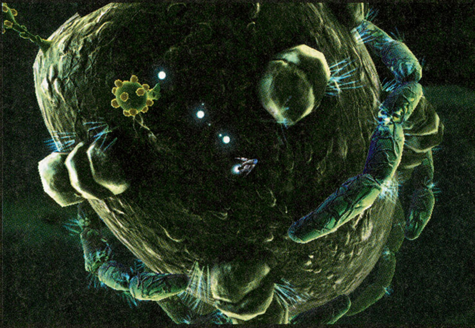


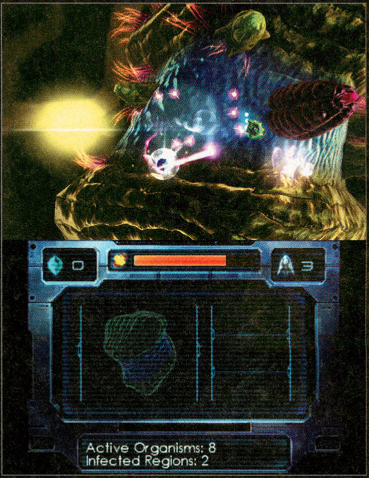
FISHING RESORT

This one's a whopper!

As you can tell by its title, Fishing Resort is indeed a fishing game. But unlike most fishing games, this one isn't just about hauling in the biggest catch. Sure, it features the intuitive angling controls you'd expect (flick the Wii Remote to cast, spin the Nunchuk to reel), and there's all kinds of tackle to obtain and equip, but Fishing Resort is more about the entire tropical vacation experience. Not only can you go fishing in a vast variety of locales around Penangkapan Island, but you can tour the island on bicycle, participate in kayak races, or just relax and visit the local aquarium. As you explore, you'll encounter NPCs—some of whom want to give you fishing-related missions or send you on fetch quests, some who want to sell you items, and others who want to challenge you to fishing contests. In addition to standard fishing, you can take part in ice fishing and participate in more than 20 fishing-based minigames. —CHRIS H.

Wii PUBLISHER: **XSEED**
DEVELOPER: **PROPE**
RELEASE: **NOVEMBER 2011**





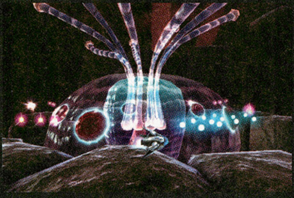
Active Organisms: 8
Infected Regions: 2

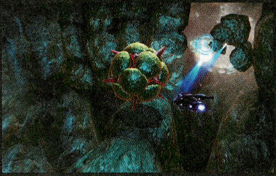
NANO ASSAULT

Get ready for some microscopic mayhem.

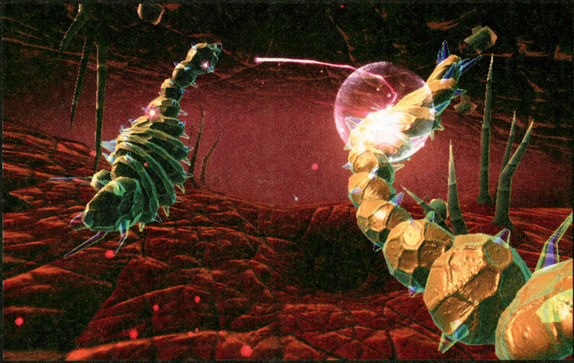
MOST CLASSIC-STYLE SHOOTERS are set in the vastness of space; Nano Assault, on the other hand, takes place within the confines of microscopic cells. When it comes to gameplay, however, it doesn't make much of a difference—your goal is to shoot, shoot, and shoot some more as you battle a deadly force threatening to wipe out humanity.

In some levels, that means guiding your miniature "nanite" ship around a comparatively large cell, collecting DNA sequences in an attempt to gather the data necessary to eradicate the Nanostray virus. (Yes, Nano Assault is a spin-off of the Nanostray games for DS.) But these cells—which feel more like small planets that offer 360 degrees of exploration—aren't hazard-free. A variety of hostile organisms (some that look like bugs, some that look like worms, some that look like projectile-firing sea anemones) await at every turn, and your mission isn't complete until you obliterate them all using twin stick-style controls that enable you to fire your spread cannons in any direction. Other cells are protected by imposing bosses, such as the tentacled monstrosity Dunkleosteus or the obstacle-generating Trilobyte.





[Below] The on-rails shooting stages through synaptic pathways are full of incredible action, and they look amazing in 3D.

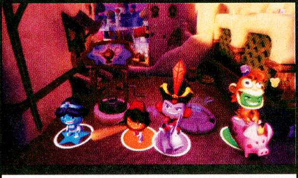


In addition, you frequently have to travel to new cell clusters by navigating synaptic pathways. Longer and more reflex-oriented than the cell stages, these auto-scrolling levels unfold from a third-person behind-the-ship perspective, much like Star Fox. Though your primary goal is to reach the end in one piece, you'll find plenty of enemies to destroy and obstacles to avoid along the way. Furthermore, these stages feature fantastic 3D visuals, and each one culminates in an intense boss battle; the relentless action provides a great excuse to unleash your secondary weapons (which include a homing shot and time-delayed bombs).

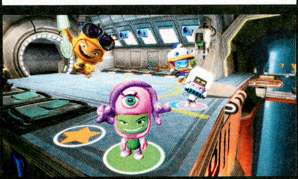
Alongside a 32-level story mode, the game features an arcade mode (which allows you to post your scores to online leaderboards), a boss-challenge mode, and numerous unlockables that you can earn by spending Nano Coins (the in-game currency) or Play Coins.

—CHRIS H.

N3DS PUBLISHER: **MAJESCO**
DEVELOPER: **SHIN'EN**
RELEASE: **NOVEMBER 2011**



[Above] You'll occasionally come across animals and vehicles that you can ride.



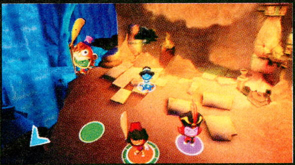
DISNEY UNIVERSE

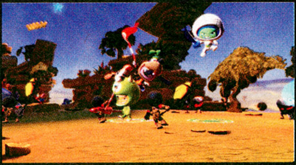
Aladdin of the Caribbean in Wonderland

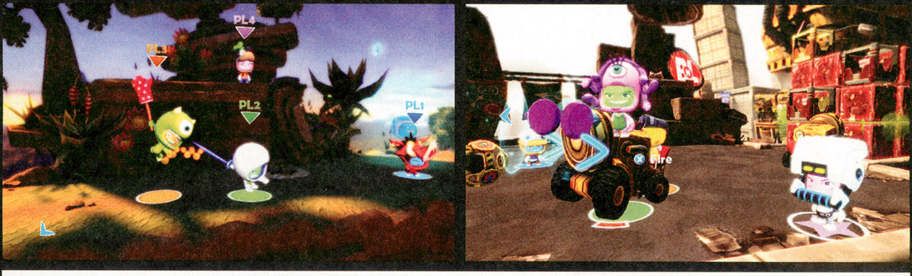
IF YOU'RE A DISNEY AFICIONADO who loves the fan service in Kingdom Hearts but could do without the convoluted storytelling and dangerously pointy coifs, Disney Universe may be just the game for you. It mashes up the company's beloved franchises in a simple, lighthearted manner evocative of the LEGO titles. You run around with up to three friends, bludgeon bad guys, and occasionally solve a few puzzles. The only real drama stems from when you "accidentally" throw a buddy off a cliff or turn him into a chicken.

Disney Universe does have a story, though it's mostly there as an excuse to bring all of these disparate properties together. In the game, players take on the role of beta testers, leading their avatars through a Disney-themed virtual realm. (What is it with Disney games going all meta lately?) When an evil hacker named Hex begins to wreak havoc on that realm, you're called upon to save it. That means purging the cyber-menace from six different worlds based on popular Disney films—*Aladdin*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Monsters, Inc.*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Lion King*, and *Wall-E*. Each of those is divided into three distinct regions and a boss battle; in the *Aladdin* section, for instance, you'll journey through the Streets of Agrabah, the Cave of Wonders, and Agrabah Palace before taking on a virtual Jafar. All six worlds are available from the get-go, so you can tackle them in any order you wish or jump back and forth between them. Aside from the obvious thematic differences, they also vary in terms of gameplay focus. The *Aladdin* world is more puzzle-heavy than the rest, while the *Monsters, Inc.* region emphasizes platforming and the *Pirates of the Caribbean* one stresses combat.

Adding to the Disney flavor is a wide selection of costumes for your avatar. You can dress the little guy as one of five characters from







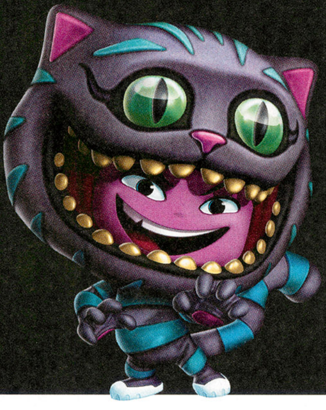
[Above left] Mike should probably be more careful around that pointy blade. He can't really afford to lose an eye.

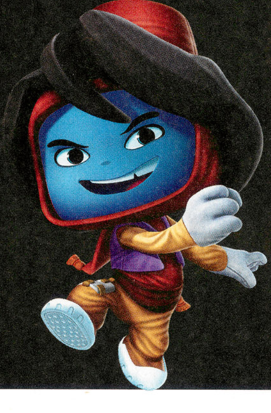
each of the aforementioned films or choose from 15 other outfits spanning the studio's entire history. That means everything from classic icons like Mickey and Donald to contemporary favorites like Stitch and Nemo. (Sadly, it doesn't appear that Oswald the Lucky Rabbit made the cut.) Unlike the locales, however, only a handful of costumes is available in the beginning. The rest you must unlock by collecting coins during your travels.

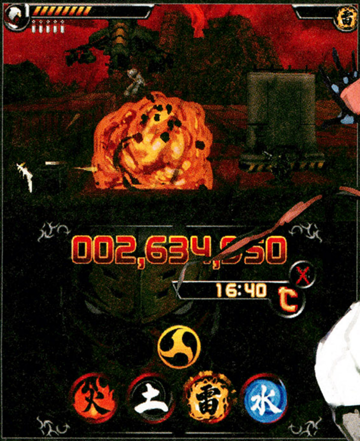
Each costume comes with a corresponding "tool" (i.e., your bludgeoning instrument; Disney insists they're not called weapons), which you can upgrade by finding blue stars hidden throughout the game. Doing so gives your tool a new look and enhanced abilities. In addition, the AI custodian of the game's virtual world will occasionally send you power-ups, such as a pair of giant boxing gloves or a Medusa head that can turn your foes to stone. Conversely, Hex lives up to his name by dispatching curses, which might replace your avatar's head with a bomb, for instance, or temporarily transform him into a chicken. A dynamic difficulty system determines the frequency with which power-ups and curses appear, as well as the efficacy of your foes. Not only can Hex's forces attack you directly, but they're also capable of building cannons and other types of hazards within the environment.

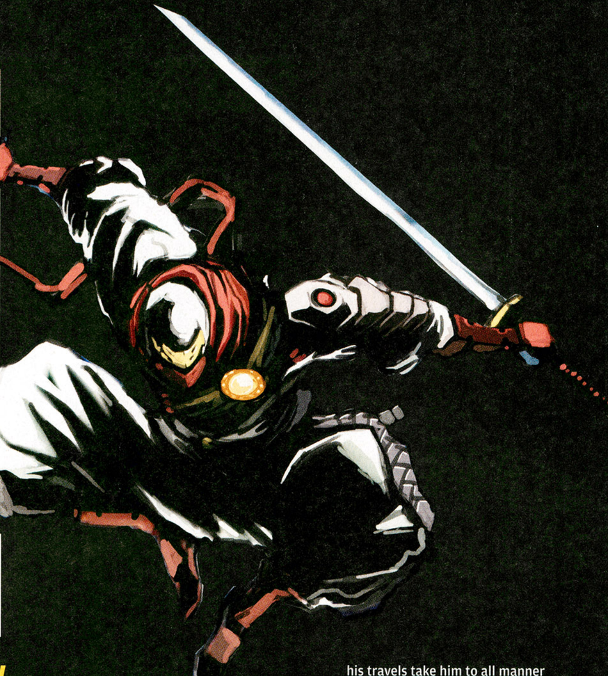
Then you have your fellow players to contend with. Though Disney Universe is ostensibly a cooperative affair, there's a strong competitive element in that a winner is declared at the conclusion of each stage. That distinction is based on a number of factors, but the upshot—if your play sessions are anything like ours—is that you'll spend a lot of time and energy making life difficult for your companions. As previously referenced, you can pick them up and throw them, transmit curses by coming in contact with other players, or even spring traps on them—whatever's necessary to take your rightful place atop the winner's podium. —STEVE T.

Wii PUBLISHER: **DISNEY**
DEVELOPER: **EUROCOM**
RELEASE: **OCTOBER 2011**









SHINOBI

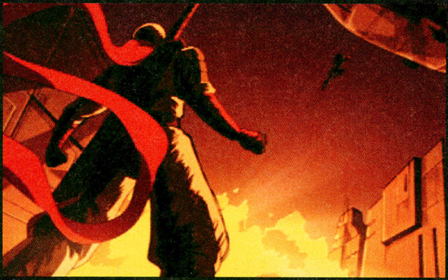
Ninja dogs need not apply.

SEGA'S SHINOBI REVIVAL reminds us that a ninja's life is never easy, and neither are his games. Whether it's The Legend of Kage, Ninja Gaiden, or previous installments of this very series, taking on the role of a ninja always seems to carry a stiff challenge. We suppose that makes sense. If you're going to simulate one of the baddest professions on the planet, you probably should be expected to bring some skills to the table.

Hence Shinobi isn't for the kind of player who shies away from adversity. Sure, it offers a Beginner's mode with infinite lives, but that sort of defeats the purpose. With games like this, the main appeal is the sense of satisfaction that comes from surmounting nigh-impossible odds—in other words, from feeling like a *ninja*. We got that in spades during our most recent demo, which spanned the first four levels of this Nintendo 3DS exclusive. Of course, it helps that protagonist Jiro Musashi boasts a repertoire equal to the tasks at hand. He can slice and dice foes with his katana, toss daggers, parry enemy attacks, cast four different types of ninja magic, latch onto ceilings with a grappling chain, perform a dodge slide, and more. There's a nice flow to combat, and enough variety—both in terms of enemies and techniques—to keep it from getting repetitive. Platforming is a big component of the game, as well, with lots of tricky wall jumps over spiked surfaces and precarious leaps onto the narrowest of ledges (one instance even recalled traumatic memories of World 8-1 in Super Mario Bros.). As hairy as things can get, however, the controls never let us down. Jiro responds just as a ninja should.

It's a good thing, too, because his travels take him to all manner of hostile territory. In those first four stages alone, he journeys from feudal Japan to the moonlit skyline of a near-future metropolis; from a speeding military train to the South American jungle. Each level is impressively long—encompassing multiple subareas—and occasionally branches along different paths. On the aforementioned locomotive, for instance, there's a point where you can either continue along the roof or drop inside and proceed through the mutant-infested cabin (where disembodied brains try to whip you with their medulla oblongatas). Though most of the action takes place from a side-scrolling perspective, the game mixes in some 3D diversions, as well. Those include riding Jiro's trusty steed, surfing an underground river, and jumping from car to car along the freeway while

[Below] The game's story is told through stunning motion comics.



LEGACY OF A NINJA

The Shinobi franchise has a long and storied history dating back almost 25 years. These are NP's picks for the best the acclaimed saga has to offer.

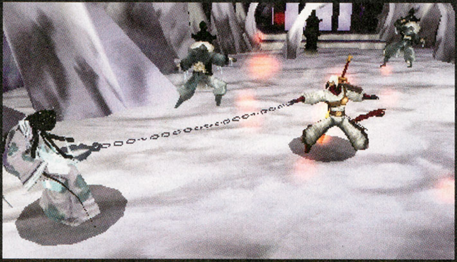
1. REVENGE OF SHINOBI – SEGA GENESIS Released just after the launch of the Genesis, this was one of the best reasons to own Sega's 16-bit console early on.

2. SHINOBI III: RETURN OF THE NINJA MASTER – SEGA GENESIS The back of the box hypes up the "real ninja sound effects," but it was Shinobi III's silky smooth action and massive bosses that won us over.

3. SHINOBI (2002) – PLAYSTATION 2 After a seven-year hiatus, the series returned in 2002 and made a surprisingly smooth transition to polygons.

4. SHADOW DANCER – ARCADE The best thing about Shadow Dancer was that you could sic your dog on bad guys. It appeared on a number of platforms, but we enjoyed the coin-op best.

5. SHINOBI (1987) – ARCADE The game that started it all may not hold up as well as the other entries on this list, but it gobbled up our quarters back in the day.



trying to avoid incoming rockets.

Each stage culminates in a boss battle, of course. During our demo, we clashed with an evil sorceress, a pair of killer robots, and a fully loaded gunship. The margin for error during these encounters is razor-thin, but all of them are pattern-based, so practice eventually makes perfect. Plus at certain points during each battle, an onscreen prompt will flash next to your opponent. If you can get close enough and hit the X Button before the prompt disappears, you'll perform a powerful special attack using Jiro's grappling chain. Against the helicopter, for instance, our hero will pull himself onto the cockpit before thrusting his blade through it. Those attacks not only dish out extra damage, but also provide a bit of cinematic flair as the camera zooms in to capture the moment up close.

In the unlikely event that simply progressing through the game doesn't prove formidable enough, you can seek out the two Mastery Coins hidden in each level. Collecting both unlocks a Challenge Map, which—if you're anything like us—leads to a lot of cursing followed by quiet weeping. On the gentler side of things, Shinobi features a robust Achievement system that rewards you with all sorts of cool unlockables for accomplishing certain tasks. Our personal favorite: the legendary Golden Axe. (Old-school Sega fans know what we're talking about.) You put that in the hands of a ninja, and it just doesn't get more badass. —STEVE T.

N3DS PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **GRIPTONITE**
RELEASE: **NOVEMBER 2011**

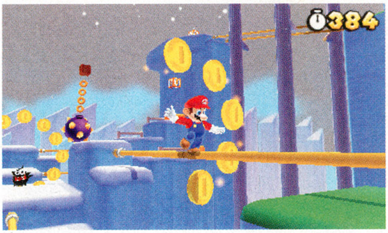
BY **CHRIS SLATE**

PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO** DEVELOPER: **NINTENDO** RELEASE: **NOVEMBER 2011**

N3DS

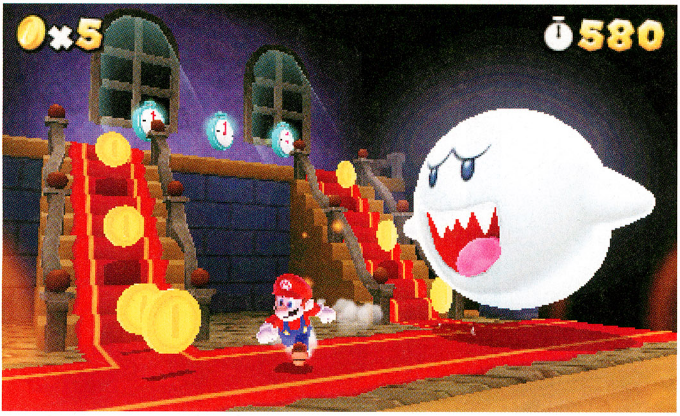
Keys to the Kingdom

Take a tour of the Mushroom Kingdom in **Super Mario 3D Land**—and bring your Tanooki Suit!



WANT TO KNOW what it's like to play the Nintendo 3DS handheld's most highly anticipated action game? You're in luck—we dug deep into a prerelease version of Super Mario 3D Land and jotted down every last detail, from Bowser's new battle tactics to how it felt to try on Mario's terrific Tanooki Suit. This is the most exhaustive look at the game you'll find before its November release, but don't worry—we won't spoil *too* much. Although our course-by-course tour of the Mushroom Kingdom covers never-before-seen stages and features, we stick to the game's starting areas. So, got your red cap on? Trimmed your mustache? Tanooki tail at the ready? OK, then—here-a we go!

SCREENSHOTS HAVE BEEN CAPTURED IN 2D MODE.



MESSING AROUND UNDERGROUND

The very first stage in Super Mario 3D Land, Course 1-1, was still being kept under wraps when we got to play the game, so our visit to the Mushroom Kingdom started with Course 1-2. We had tried this blue-bricked underground area several times before, starting with the demo shown at the Electronic Entertainment Expo in June, so we used the familiar territory to reacquaint ourselves with the game. The stage's confined spaces and side-scrolling left-to-right progression are indicative of much of the game; while at first glance Super Mario 3D Land appears to follow in the footsteps of past three-dimensional Mario adventures like Super Mario 64 and Super Mario Galaxy, it actually plays closer to the New Super Mario Bros. titles. Even when certain stages call for Mario to progress in different directions, such as into the screen, the emphasis remains on snappy action instead of exploration—in the set of levels we played, we never spent a second figuring out where to go next or how to get there. We're not complaining—most of Mario's best games have provided straightforward platforming.

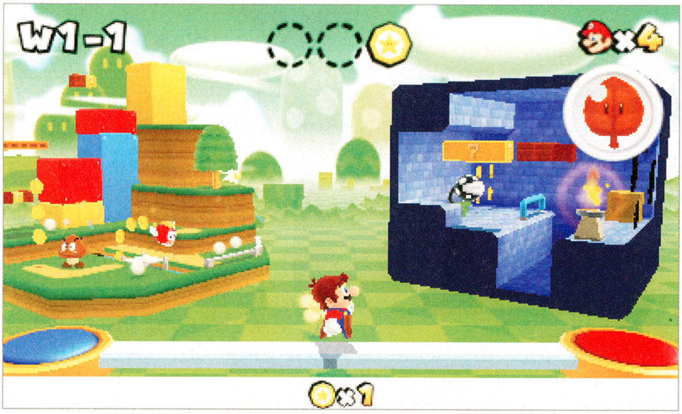
Course 1-2 is the game at its most linear, and here the depth that the third dimension provides is used mostly to sidestep Goombas and hit every ? Block (some of which are now elongated and give three coins per punch). There is a neat moment, however, in which you can bypass a bridge by taking an alternate route along a ledge in the background. Mario looks tiny as he runs along in the distance, taking down fire-spitting Piranha Plants as he comes across them. In the foreground, a series of massive spiked balls swing by chains over the bridge, moving toward and away from the screen in a very good use of stereoscopic 3D. The 3D visuals in this game are exceptionally good overall—even with the 3D Slider at full volume the effect isn't too jarring, and strikes a nice balance between adding a moderate naturalism to the environments and occasionally poking things out at you. Other games have made good use of 3D, but Super Mario 3D Land is the first Nintendo 3DS title that seems like it was built around the feature. It adds so much to the feel of the game that we would never consider playing without it.

The course eventually comes to a dead end where you take a green pipe back to the surface, but not before tossing a few fireballs to light a nearby torch, which makes some secret coins appear (good thing we had picked up a Fire Flower). The pipe put us in a small area featuring little more than a flagpole, which, as any Mario maniac worth his mustache can guess, must be grabbed to end the level. Every course ends this way, and each includes a method for skilled players to leap to the very top of the pole and earn an instant 1-Up.

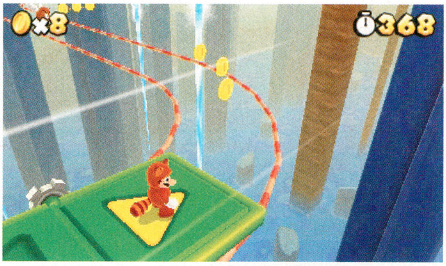
MARIO THE MOUNTAINEER

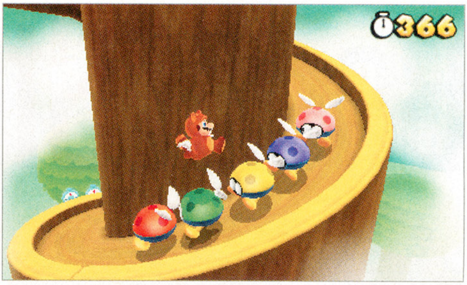
Our next stop was Course 1-3, which is a bright, brand-new area surrounded by mountains. This level extends toward the horizon so that Mario runs into the screen to traverse it. In side-scrolling stages it's possible to press left or right on the Control Pad to shift the camera and peek at the path in front of or behind you, but that function is disabled here.

It's impressive to simply stand on the starting platform and stare into the distance; nearly the entire stage is visible from this vantage point, with even far-off areas and enemies showing up. Just a few steps away, a telescope offers an even better look at what lies ahead. Stand on the plate in front of it, and the camera switches to a first-person view that you can aim either by moving the Circle Pad or by tilting the Nintendo 3DS, just as you would aim an item such as the slingshot in The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time 3D. Once you're looking through the telescope, Toad starts calling "Hey!" After a bit of searching, we spied the friendly fungus hopping up and down on a mountaintop. We zoomed in on him by holding down the R Button, at which point he giggled and tossed a medal out to a spot further along our path where we could eventually nab it. Every course contains a set of medals for completists to collect, often through daring displays of platforming prowess. And as with Comet Medals in Super Mario Galaxy 2, a faint chime



Mario uses the map screen to travel between courses, each of which is represented by a cool-looking diorama.





[Above] Course 1-4 has Mario ride rails at dizzying heights.

alerts you when a medal is nearby.

Once we finally got moving through the stage, we quickly encountered several new elements and enemies. A parade of ladybug-looking creatures of various colors marched in a circle, and while we could have easily run around them, we wanted the 1-Up that is awarded for bouncing on each of their heads in succession. A little farther on we leapt inside a floating purple box that contained a bonus room filled with coins, and then we rode a green platform across a set of rails that carried us over a great chasm (you move the platform forward and backward by standing at its front or back to tilt it in the corresponding direction).

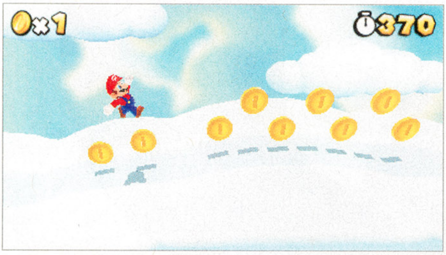
But the real excitement came when, using Mario's trusty Ground Pound maneuver (performed by pressing L or R while jumping), we hammered down a wooden trunk that released a Tanooki Leaf. Grabbing it gave us our first chance in over two decades to don the iconic Tanooki Suit, and while its powers work a bit differently than before, it's still incredibly useful. The suit's striped tail is no longer used to fly, but to flutter, similar to the gravity-defying flutter jump employed by Yoshi in other games. By continuing to hold the jump button you descend much slower than normal for as long as you're falling. While on the ground you can whip the suit's tail at bricks and bad guys, a fact that some fire-spewing Piranha Plants immediately discovered, much to their detriment. You can even swing the tail while holding L or R to crouch, which we did repeatedly while moving Mario around with the Circle Pad because it gives the impression of spastic breakdancing.

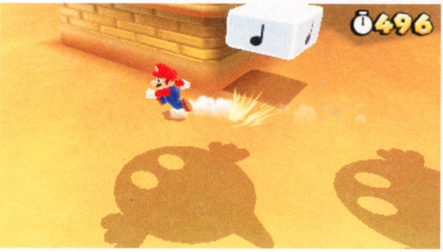
After crouch-walking through a tight, easy-to-miss tunnel that contained a 1-Up, we encountered another reminder of Super Mario Bros. 3: a white block marked with a musical note. A properly timed jump from this block will bounce Mario high into the air, which allowed us to snag the medal that Toad had tossed out earlier. We next encountered a larger, flashing version of the note block; this one sprung us off the screen and into an entirely new side-scrolling bonus stage. Here we grabbed an invincibility star, which enabled us to charge across the clouds through rows of bad guys and jump in high arcs to collect trails of coins. The area ended with a long leap off the clouds to reach a floating medal on our way back down to the main path.

After hopping through a hoop to make five red coins appear atop two moving cloud platforms, we kicked open a rock that contained a standard gold coin and made our way to the exit. The course ended with a series of long, death-defying drops to lower clouds while we tried to grab columns of floating coins and another medal (the slow, precise descent afforded by the Tanooki Suit really comes in handy here), followed by a second ride on rails and another triumphant leap to a flagpole.

RIDING THE RAILS

Course 1-4 changed things up quite a bit—it consists almost entirely of rails, with no ground to catch you if you fall. You move across the rails by tilting a green platform to roll forward or backward, much like the maneuvering from the previous stage. Here we were thankful that Mario moves a little slower in this game than usual. For the first time in a three-dimensional Mario platformer, a button must be held down to run, which kind of threw us at first. But given the limited view of the game's play area when compared to that of its console counterparts, the more deliberate default tempo kept us from accidentally running off countless cliffs. With little chance of skidding Mario off the platform, it wasn't tough to roll along the rails

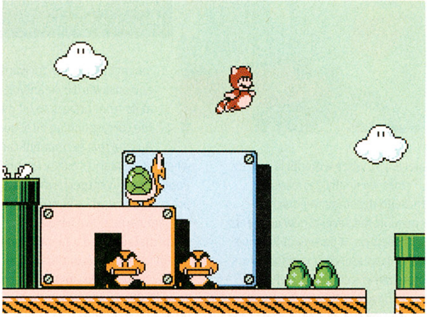




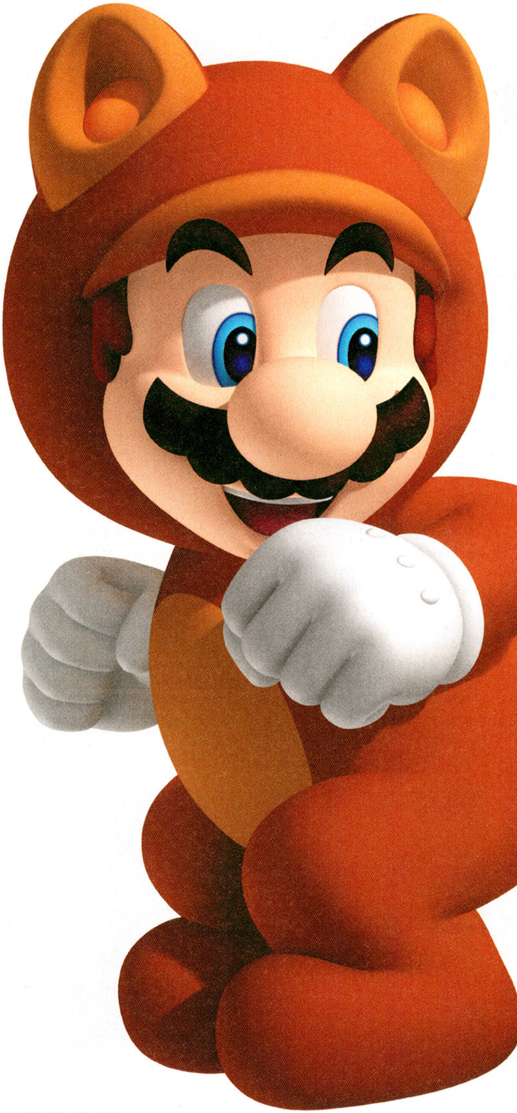
SCREENSHOTS HAVE BEEN CAPTURED IN 2D MODE.

Back in Style

Named after the real-life Japanese "raccoon dog," the tanuki, the iconic Tanooki Suit makes its first appearance since its Super Mario Bros. 3 debut 21 years ago. While the outrageous outfit looks the same as before, it performs like the less-powerful Raccoon Tail power up in SMB3, which could be used only to tail-whip enemies and slow Mario's fall. The Tanooki suit no longer lets Mario fly or hide from enemies as a statue, but it's still very handy, and we're thrilled to have it back.



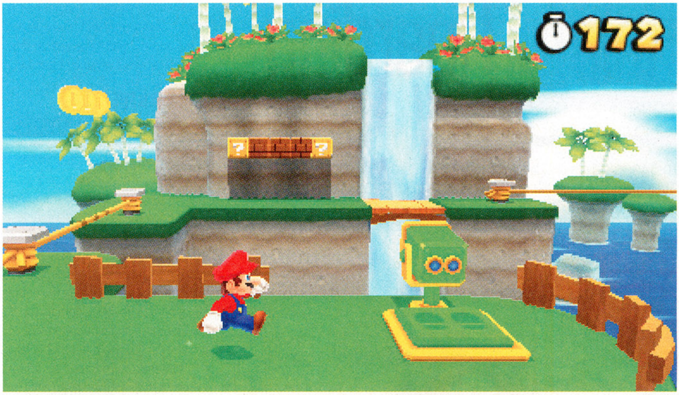
The Tanooki Suit first took flight in the 1990 NES classic Super Mario Bros. 3.



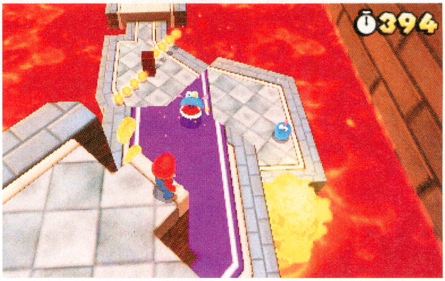
This outdoorsy outfit may look good-naturedly goofy to us humans, but just imagine the shock that real tanuki must go through when they see Mario's mustachioed mug popping out their familiar fuzzy form!

while dodging Paragoombas and collecting floating coins. Things got dicey when our platform was pounded by geysers and sent soaring to a second set of tracks above, but we managed to keep our composure and even collect a medal.

Midway through the level you get to disembark on a small cliff to relax your nerves a bit. Here you can touch a checkpoint flag to save your progress (one of these appears at the midpoint of every course) and let off a little steam by scaring away a bird, which drops a coin. But before too much time can tick off the clock, you're off to traverse a new set of tracks. The back half of the stage is harder, with your platform dropping from one set of rails to another as Piranha Plants spit fire at you. We sent Mario to several untimely deaths during this stretch of the course, which eventually caused the game to take pity on us by placing an alternating power-up box near the midlevel checkpoint. The superprecise leaping ability of the Tanooki Suit is what you want, and if you don't score one randomly from the box, you get a second chance farther along the tracks in a purple-box bonus room. The stage ends with a heart-pounding rollercoaster-like descent in which your platform rockets down the rails at a steep angle, leading to a stomach-dropping fall to an orange block that teleports Mario safely to the flagpole.



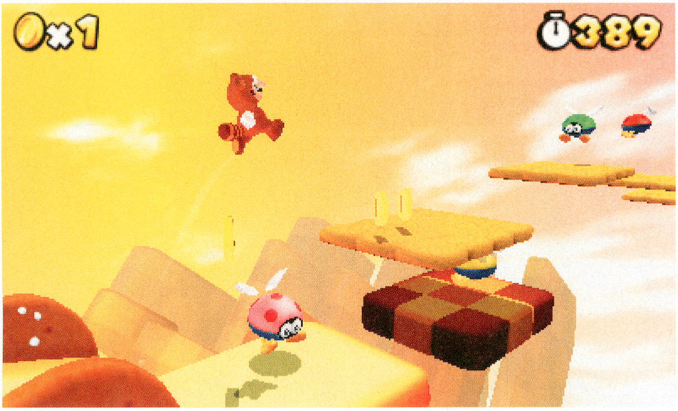
[Above] In some stages, Mario will find a telescope that he can use to peek ahead at what's waiting for him.



BOWSER BATTLE!

With the rest of World 1 under our belts, it was at last time to tussle with the biggest and baddest bad guy in the Mushroom Kingdom. As you would expect, this first Bowser stage comes with the usual stuff: a castle motif, regenerating Dry Bones, giant Thwomps, spinning rows of fireballs, and lots of lava. The course starts with a dizzying 3D descent down a tall, multitiered stone structure that leads to a series of various-sized platforms at the lava level. Mario's path then takes him into the screen, where he immediately encounters new cuddly blue dragons that seem harmless until they start sneezing fireballs. A Hammer Brother makes his first appearance in the game here, but he went down like a chump with a single swing of our Tanooki tail. We raced under two alternately thudding Thwomps, and since this isn't our first trip to the Mushroom Kingdom, we tried hopping on top of one using a new variation of the backflip introduced in Super Mario 64. Like before, you start the move by crouching (hold L or R), but now you must *stay* crouched for about a second to charge it up. And once you jump, you can flip forward as well as backward. Our gambit paid off: the Thwomp carried us to an area high above that held a medal, a telescope, and a stopwatch. The latter item pops up regularly in all the courses, and we often found that we needed the bonus seconds it adds to our time limit. A quick peek through the telescope showed us our destination: a Toad locked behind bars.

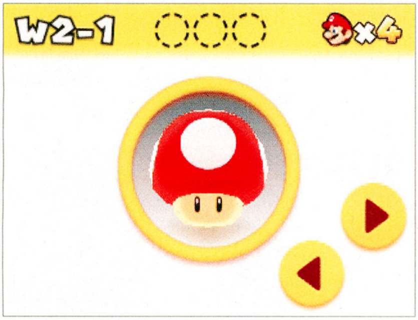
Back on the main path, we rounded one more corner before Bowser appeared in the distance. In typical Koopa King style, he wasn't about to let us anywhere near his captive, and started throwing enormous fireballs in our direction. The path at this point leads into the screen directly toward Bowser, and offers occasional nooks for Mario to duck into so the fireballs can sail harmlessly by overhead. In no time at all we reached our enemy, who then took a massive leap farther into the course. At this point Mario must run to the left as fast as he



SCREENSHOTS HAVE BEEN CAPTURED IN 2D MODE.

Helpful Hoarding

The lower screen on the Nintendo 3DS system is used to hold a spare power up. If you were to, for example, grab a Tanooki Leaf while you were Fire Mario, you would change to Tanooki Mario and send the Fire Flower into reserve. Touching the Fire Flower icon on the bottom screen would swap it back for the Tanooki Leaf, and the two items could be endlessly exchanged to serve different situations.



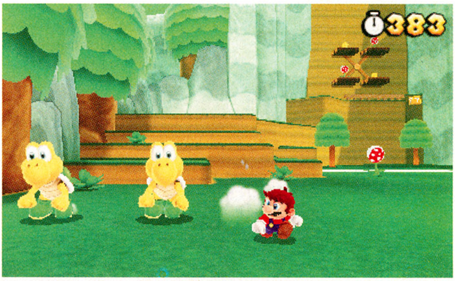
can to avoid more of Bowser's fire, which is being thrown from a bridge that runs parallel to Mario's path in the distance. Long jumps help boost Mario ahead of the flames (jump while running and holding L or R), and soon he must pull a U-turn onto Bowser's bridge for a final showdown. As in the original Super Mario Bros., the goal is simply to slip past Bowser (either under him as he jumps or past his side when he leaves an opening) and reach a button that will blow up the bridge and drop Bowser into the lava. Getting past him is tough because the bridge is so long, and the first time or two you slip by he'll leap backward to block you again. There's little room for error on the narrow span, and during this intense faceoff we noticed Bowser has his own big Tanooki tail. Weird. Anyway, we soon reached the end of the bridge, hit the button, and sank his spiky butt into the lava. But did we drop the real king of the Koopas? Just before he falls, Bowser poofs into a Goomba holding a Tanooki Leaf. Looks like both the princess *and* our true enemy are in a different castle this time. A door opened and we rushed through, continued past a thankful Toad yelling "yippee," and hopped into an orange box that teleported us to the end-of-level flagpole that flew a special Bowser version of the flag.

STORMING THE CASTLE

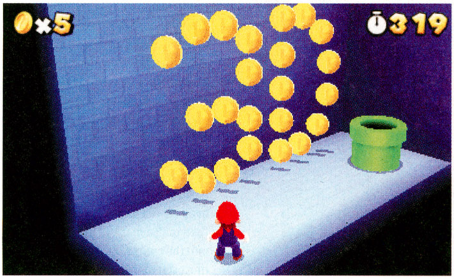
That brought the first world to a close, in which we learned an awful lot about the game from just those first few courses. But we hadn't yet had our fill of hopping and stomping! It was on to World 2 where a couple more courses were complete enough for us to check them out. Course 2-1 was the total reverse of the stage we had just cleared, swapping the doom and gloom of Bowser's domain for the blue skies and pink spires of a pristine castle. This is another level that Nintendo has demoed at various events, but it's evolved quite a bit. Firstly, there is now a telescope at the start of the stage. Suspecting that we should once again use it to look for Toad, we found him trying to get our attention from atop the castle. Remember the Propeller Blocks from New Super Mario Bros. Wii, the things you could hold and use to zip high into the air? Toad was *wearing* one. (It was pretty hilarious—he was almost entirely covered, with just his little feet poking out the bottom.) Once he had our attention, he gave us a demonstration of the Propeller Block by flying to a new spot, where he would wait for us next to a medal.

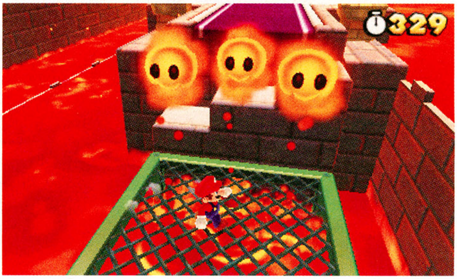
In this course Mario starts off by running into the screen toward the castle in the distance, but he must eventually scale a tall section of moving platforms to reach the end. Mario is met with the kinds of obstacles we've already covered, plus Tanooki-tailed Goombas that flutter-jump at him as he rushes by (stomping one steals its Tanooki Leaf). A medal can be found down a green pipe in a room that is noteworthy for its visual trickery. The medal rests on a block that, at first glance, appears to be stacked on top of a bunch of other blocks, but stepping on a switch marked with a picture of an eye shifts the camera view to reveal that the block is actually floating in front of the others. If you look closely, you can spot the block's true position without shifting the camera if you're playing in 3D, but it's impossible to do so in 2D. This is a really neat use of the stereoscopic 3D effect that we hope to see more of in later levels.

When we finally found a Propeller Block for Mario to put on, just his legs stuck out of the bottom, as did his tail, since he was wearing a Tanooki Suit. (This block doesn't count as a suit, so it doesn't replace whatever Mario might be wearing.) To fly superhigh, you leap, then tap the jump button a second time;



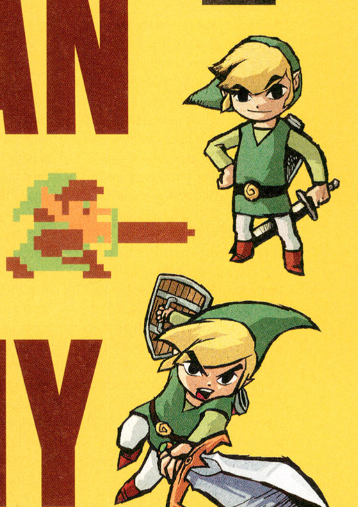
[Below] Mario can reach new heights while wearing a Propeller Block.

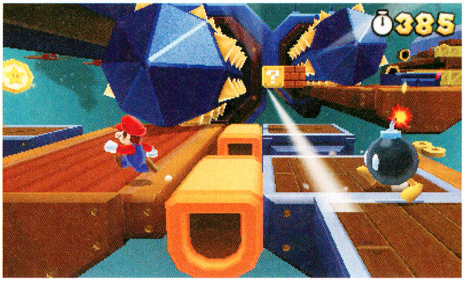


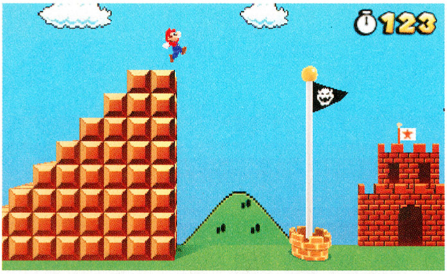


SCREENSHOTS HAVE BEEN CAPTURED IN 2D MODE.

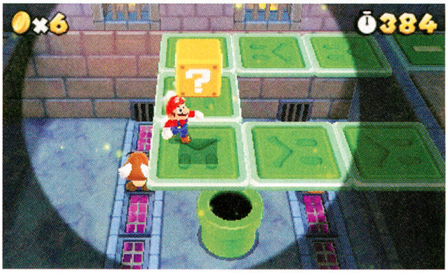
WHERE CAN YOU FIND THIS MANY GREEN CAPS?







[Below] Unfurling pathways carry Mario across danger in Course 2-2.



the longer you hold the button, the higher you go. It's important to keep the Propeller Block until the very end of the stage, because you can't reach the top of the flagpole without it. Interesting side note: a strange, living coin purse hangs out near the flagpole, and that purse spills its loot as you jump on it—pound on it enough, and it'll even give you a 1-Up.

DARK AND DANK

The final normal stage that we tried was a nice bookend to our tour of the Mushroom Kingdom, since, like the first stage that we played, Course 2-2 is an underground area. There are two major differences between this level and Course 1-2, however: the environment is so dark that visibility is poor beyond a circle of light that stays centered on Mario, and much of the stage is covered in pools of poisonous purple goop. Safely crossing the lethal liquid can be tricky: platforms can be triggered to unfurl into midair walkways, but they fold back up after a short time, so Mario has to get a move on. The platforms form paths that duck in and out of walls, snake under ? Blocks and medals, and dip in and out of the ooze. A final unfolding walkway leads to the flagpole, but a well-timed long jump is still needed to reach the top.

SHIPS AHOY!

To cap things off, we skipped ahead to World 3 and hopped aboard a flying ship—yes, *that* kind of flying ship, the type made famous in Super Mario Bros. 3 through multiple levels of punishing difficulty. We had little trouble completing this course, however; we were only in World 3, after all. The stage is a straightforward side-scroller with some of the best 3D effects we've seen in the game so far, especially when giant spiky pistons appear to thrust out of the screen at you. In fact, there's an eye-popping use of 3D right at the start of the stage if you guide Mario toward the screen to reveal a small balcony that holds a Super Mushroom—both Mario and the balcony look like they're hovering out in front of you.

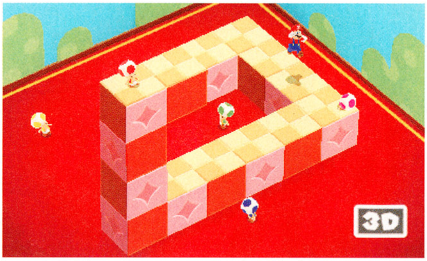
Much of the course consists of waiting for pistons to retract and then running by them before they fire again. This is made more challenging when also dealing with falling platforms, explosive Mario-seeking Bob-ombs, and cannons that launch spiky balls, but skilled players will find that a lot of corners can be cut with daring long jumps. And taking a hit isn't entirely bad news, as the result is that Mario gains a few seconds of useful invincibility that can get him through tough spots (although he looks pitiful when rendered small and hatless). The course climaxes in a race against time as you run across a lengthy bridge of falling platforms to reach a green pipe before a long row of pistons stabs out at you.

Through the pipe waits Boom Boom, a boss that first appeared in—you guessed it—Super Mario Bros. 3 (the NES classic must have an awful lot of fans on the Super Mario 3D Land development team!). The cranky Koopa holds out his fists and spins around like a top, slowly steering himself toward Mario until he gets dizzy and falls down. This leaves his bald noggin an easy target for Mario's fearsome feet, and after taking a good stomp, Boom Boom retreats inside his spiky shell and skitters along the floor. Dodging this desperate attack is made difficult by the fact that the floor is split into two conveyor belts moving in opposite directions, which slow or speed Mario and his foe as they move around the room. However, Boom Boom soon restarts his attack pattern with his spinning punch, and it takes a total of just three stomps to put him down for good. After victory Mario heads above deck to slide down the flagpole, but not before grabbing a medal that's hidden offscreen at the end of a long and narrow wooden beam.

MUCH MORE TO COME

We hate to end the tour here, but with the game's release just around the corner, only a bully like Bowser would spoil much more. If you haven't watched the official trailer, check it out at www.SuperMario3DLand.com to see Mario swim, walk on tightropes, and traverse a top-down level inspired by The Legend of Zelda.

Before we go, a few final notes: in addition to the moves that we mentioned, Mario has retained his wall jump and cartwheel jump, although there was little use for them in the stages we played. The triple jump, however, is gone after having been a Mario-series mainstay for quite some time. Also, Nintendo representatives let slip that the game will include support for the Nintendo 3DS system's StreetPass feature, although they were mum on details. And finally, these early courses were pretty easy for Mario maestros like us, so we're curious to see if the game's challenge level will veer toward the especially accessible New Super Mario Bros. for Nintendo DS or head in the direction of Mario's more challenging recent games. Either way, we can't wait to take a return trip to Super Mario 3D Land. Brand-new Super Mario games don't come around very often, and we plan to savor every moment.



SCREENSHOTS HAVE BEEN CAPTURED IN 2D MODE.

IN THE ONLY OFFICIAL GUIDE TO OCTOROKS, GORONS, OCARINAS, AND YES, GREEN CAPS!

The OFFICIAL GUIDE to THE LEGEND OF
ZELDA™
NINTENDO POWER
COLLECTOR'S SPECIAL
2nd EDITION
REVISED & UPDATED
BONUS POSTERS INSIDE
REAL HEROES WEAR TIGHTS!
INSIDE the LEGEND
The heroes, villains, and games that forged Nintendo's epic series!
DISPLAY UNTIL JANUARY 3, 2012
$9.99US
Future
MEDIA WITH PASSION

Available at newsstands, or order now at www.nintendopower.com/SPC

Nintendo properties are trademarks of Nintendo.

© 2011 Future US, Inc.

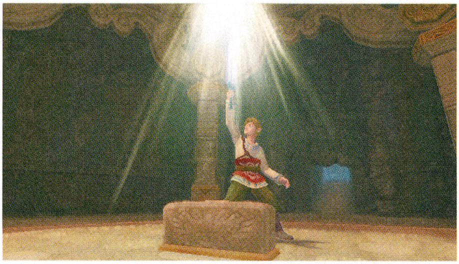
The biggest Wii game of the year is ready to soar!

Reaching for the Sky

We've got 19 new reasons why **The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword** will be a must-play epic.

BY **CHRIS HOFFMAN**

PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO** DEVELOPER: **NINTENDO** RELEASE: **NOVEMBER 2011** Wii



Without the power of the Goddess Sword, Link wouldn't stand a chance against the trials he faces.

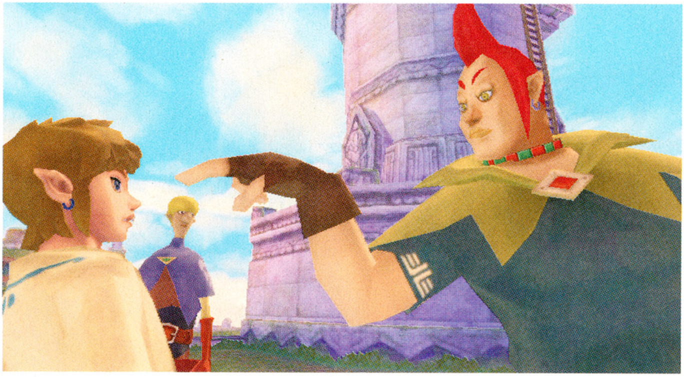
Ever since Nintendo unveiled The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword, we've known it would be something special. How could it not be? After all, it's the latest game in the renowned Legend of Zelda franchise, enhanced with Wii MotionPlus controls (including one-to-one sword combat), a unique and vibrant art style, and new twists on series conventions. Link, for example, is a knight in training, and Zelda isn't even a princess! Over the past several months, we've had the chance to soar through the sky atop giant birds called Loftwings, explore a mysterious forest, navigate a portion of a treacherous dungeon, and even battle Ghirahim, the game's new villain. More recently, we got to experience the first several hours of gameplay, and we've walked away convinced that Skyward Sword will be another incredible can't-miss adventure. Here are 19 of the reasons why.

1. SKYLOFT IS HUGE!

We've known for a long time that one of the primary locations in The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword would be Skyloft—a world floating amongst the clouds—but we didn't realize just how big it was going to be. Not only does the airborne island contain the Knight Academy, where Link is enrolled, but it also contains a giant goddess statue, a large residential quarters, a plaza, and a cave near a majestic waterfall. There are lots of locations to explore off the beaten path, and there are even additional floating islands, separate from the main island. And get this: unlike locales in most video games, Skyloft has a bathhouse and a toilet! Finally, Link can get some relief.

2. NEW FACES

Several new characters reside on Skyloft, most notably Link's instructors and classmates at the Knight Academy. The headmaster, Gaepora, is Zelda's father. He's a large man with an imposing presence, and he sports a stylin' unibrow. Longtime Zelda fans might note that his name is similar to that of Kaepora Gaebora, the owl from The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time, and oddly enough, Gaepora tends to laugh with an owl-like "hoo, hoo, hoo." Another important character is Groose, who's sort of the Biff Tannen of Skyloft. Always accompanied by his lackeys Cawlin and Stritch, Groose is quick to bully people to get his way; he's also got a major crush on Zelda. Other significant characters include Pipit (a senior student and the academy's resident bird expert) and Fledge (who's a nice guy, but kind of a wimp).

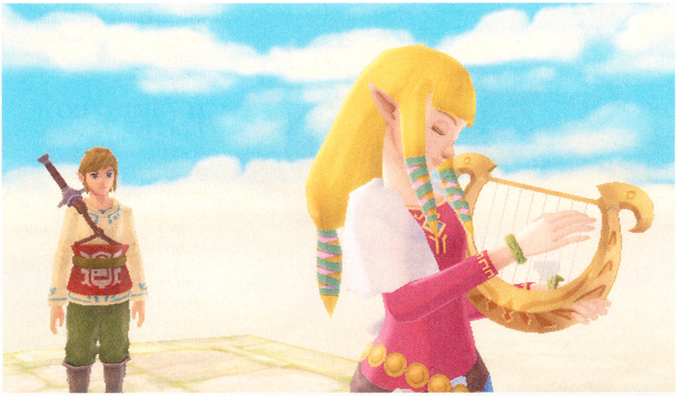


3. MAKING A MESS

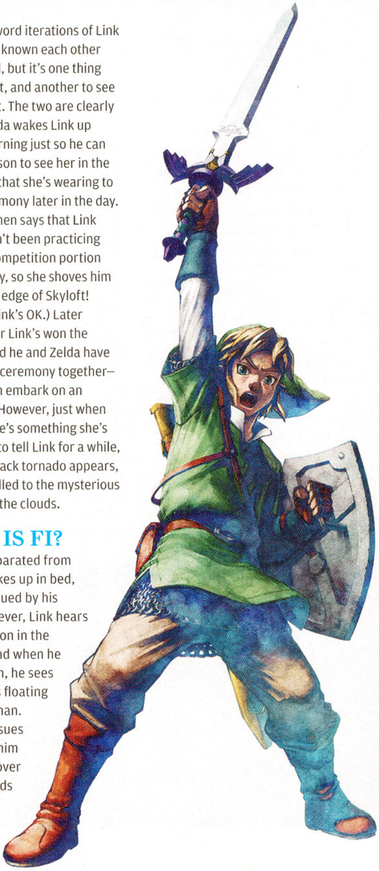
In previous Zelda games, household objects were frequently nailed down and weren't interactive. In Skyward Sword, that's not the case. As you wander through the Knight Academy and other places in Skyloft, you'll discover that lots of stuff can be knocked over, including glasses, plates, vases, and flowerpots. If you perform a roll (triggered by shaking the Nunchuk controller while you're dashing) into a piece of furniture, any objects on top of it will likely fall over and shatter. It's not a very nice thing to do, but it's one example of how Skyward Sword creates one of the most convincing worlds in the Zelda series.

4. A BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP

We've been aware for a while that



As part of an important Skyloft ceremony, Link and Zelda share a magical moment atop the gargantuan goddess statue.



the Skyward Sword iterations of Link and Zelda have known each other since childhood, but it's one thing to be aware of it, and another to see how it plays out. The two are clearly very close—Zelda wakes Link up early in the morning just so he can be the first person to see her in the goddess attire that she's wearing to perform a ceremony later in the day. However, she then says that Link is lazy and hasn't been practicing for the flight-competition portion of the ceremony, so she shoves him straight off the edge of Skyloft! (Don't worry; Link's OK.) Later in the day—after Link's won the competition and he and Zelda have performed the ceremony together—the two of them embark on an evening flight. However, just when Zelda says there's something she's been meaning to tell Link for a while, an unearthly black tornado appears, and Zelda is pulled to the mysterious world beneath the clouds.

5. WHO IS FI?

After being separated from Zelda, Link wakes up in bed, thankfully rescued by his Loftwing. However, Link hears some commotion in the hall outside, and when he leaves his room, he sees the mysterious floating figure of a woman. When Link pursues her, she leads him on a chase all over Skyloft that ends at the goddess statue. There we find out that Fi is a spirit that resides in a mystical blade called the Goddess Sword, and that she considers Link her new master. Created by the goddess herself, Fi is full of knowledge that will help Link fulfill his destiny.

6. DEMONIC KITTY ATTACK!

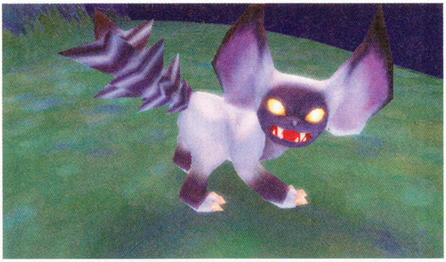
Like the worlds of many Zelda games, that of Skyward Sword is active during both day and night. However, the day/night change doesn't occur in real time; you must go to sleep to make time pass. (You can choose to sleep until night or morning.) At night, Skyloft becomes a dangerous place. You'll have to fight off bats and slimes, and even the kitty-cats become aggressive. The demonic kitties are easily some of the freakiest things we've ever seen in a Zelda game.

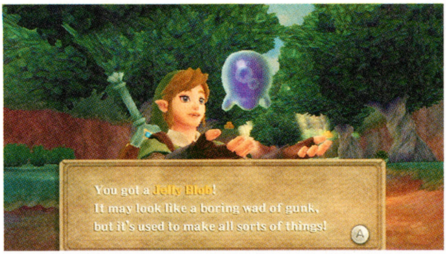
7. INTERFACE OPTIONS

Some of the early screens shown for Skyward Sword featured a pretty beefy user interface, complete with an image of the controller superimposed over part of the display. But you'll see no such thing on the screenshots in this feature. It turns out the interface is adjustable. The Standard interface includes the controller overlay and button functions; the Light interface shows only a few button designations; and the Pro interface is almost totally clean.

8. HOW BAZAAR!

One of the most important buildings in Skyloft is the bazaar. If you need it, the bazaar has probably got it. Not only does the bazaar contain an item shop (where you can buy shields, bombs, arrows, and the like) and a potion shop (which offers several types of potions, including Heart Potions to restore your health and Guardian





You got a Jelly Blob!
It may look like a boring wad of gunk,
but it's used to make all sorts of things!

[Above] By collecting Jelly Blobs and other assorted goods, Link will be able to enhance his equipment at Skyloft's Scrap Shop.

Potions to reduce the damage you receive), but it also has a fortune teller, a storage facility (to store items that won't fit in your inventory), and the Scrap Shop, which is sort of like a blacksmith's.

9. THE BIG, BLACK MONSTER

Through the early goings of Skyward Sword, Link repeatedly has dreams of an enormous worm-like monster with giant pointed teeth. At one point early in the game Ghirahim makes mention of resurrecting his master—it couldn't be this behemoth, could it?

10. ITEM ENHANCEMENT

The Scrap Shop offers a service that enables you to power up your items and equipment. To do so, though, you'll need to acquire rare ingredients—such as hornet larvae, ornamental skulls, and lizard tails—during your travels. Some are obtained by defeating enemies, others are found while exploring, but all of them can prove useful. For example, if you use two amber relics, one monster claw, and one jelly blob to enhance your wooden shield, it'll upgrade to a much more durable Banded Shield.

11. GIFTS FROM BELOW

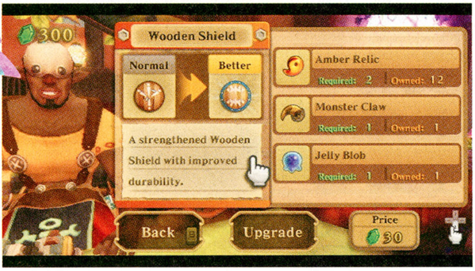
As you explore Skyloft, you'll occasionally come across big silver treasure chests that can't be opened. What's the secret? When you reach the surface world, you'll encounter strange blocks known as Goddess Cubes. If you blast a Goddess Cube with a Skyward Strike from your sword, you'll make the block launch into the sky, unlocking one of the silver chests. When you return to Skyloft, you'll want to be sure to track down the treasure.

12. RETURN OF THE SHEIKAH STONES

If you played The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time 3D, then you already know about the Sheikah Stones—helpful monuments that provide video hints about what to do next if you get stuck. Well, they're back in Skyward Sword. In fact, a Sheikah Stone appears in the courtyard outside the Knight Academy shortly after the adventure begins.

13. GREAT SAVINGS

In most Zelda games you can save anywhere you want. Not so in Skyward Sword—you can save only at designated points by interacting with special statues. The downside, of course, is that you can't save on a whim. The upside, though, is that it allows you to save your exact location; you aren't sent back to Link's room or the beginning of a dungeon just because you needed to turn off your game. In fact, there are frequently save points in mid-dungeon and just before boss battles.



300

Wooden Shield

Normal → Better

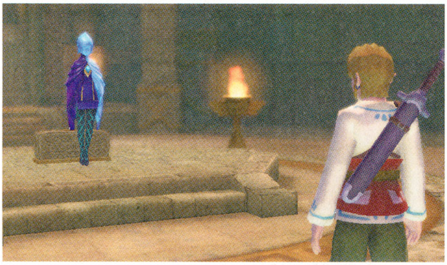
A strengthened Wooden Shield with improved durability.

Amber Relic Required: 2 Owned: 12

Monster Claw Required: 1 Owned: 1

Jelly Blob Required: 1 Owned: 1

Price 30



Equally useful is the fact that when you travel from Skyloft to the surface world, you can travel directly to any save point you've activated (except for the ones in dungeons).

14. THE NEW ELDIN PROVINCE

In The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess, Eldin Province was a rugged, dry land that offered plenty of challenge. In Skyward Sword, it's more than rugged and dry—it's hazardous and hot. This iteration of Eldin Province is full of lethal lava streams and rocky terrain, and any plant life that manages to exist is withered and brown. You'll encounter enemies called Pyrups in Eldin; these foes like to hide in small caves or within the skeletal remains of other beasts, then breathe fire at anybody that comes by. However, you'll be able to make short work of them by cleverly tossing or rolling Bomb Flowers to penetrate their defenses.

15. MEET THE MOGMA

You'll encounter several new races of creatures in Skyward Sword, including the molelike Mogma. We had previously seen these guys briefly during a nonplayable demo, but now that we've met them ourselves we're kind of shocked at how cowardly they are. Apparently they're great at digging and treasure-hunting, but they're likely to run from their own shadows. Nonetheless, they're nice chaps, and they reward Link for his help by giving him Digging Mitts and a Bomb Bag.

16. BOKOBLIN EVICTION SERVICE

Bokoblins—nasty red-skinned enemies that you can see in some of the screenshots on this page—are trying to take over Eldin Province, and it's up to Link to stop them. They've even set up a makeshift village (mainly consisting of lumber and tattered cloth) halfway up a volcano. Luckily, Link has the skills to single-handedly raid the village, defeat all the bad guys, and blow their watchtowers to the ground.

17. WOMAN IN BLACK

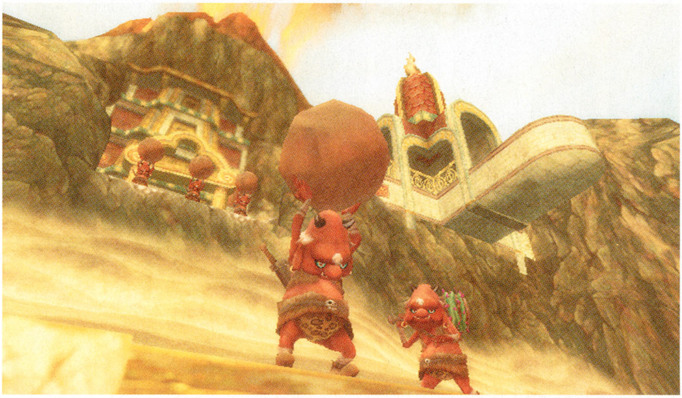
As Link explores the surface world in an attempt to find Zelda, he crosses paths with an enigmatic, ninjalike woman in black. Who is she? What is she doing? All we know for sure is that she wears the mark of the Sheikah on her clothes and her forehead. Hopefully she's friendly.

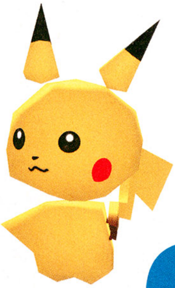
18. THE EARTH TEMPLE

The second dungeon in the game is the Earth Temple, located within a volcano in Eldin Province. The temple has a Chinese dragon theme, and, as you'd expect, the place is full of lava. It's also got a number of dangerous Lizalfos to deal with, as well as fire-spitting foes. You'll spend a great deal of time in this dungeon atop a stone sphere (which was originally the eyeball of a massive statue) to navigate some treacherous lava floes. You'll frequently have to use bombs to create new paths as you guide the sphere to its destination. Toward the end of the dungeon, Link has an Indiana Jones moment—after he grabs an item from a treasure chest, he finds himself running from a giant boulder!

19. FEARSOME FIEND

We saw the Earth Temple's boss—the Pyroclastic Fiend Spaldera—in screenshots distributed at this year's E3. Now we've had a chance to fight it—and it's quite a battle. Though it bears some resemblance to a humongous insect, it's more like a blob with six legs, encased in a stone shell. That can burst into flame whenever it wants. As it charges at you, you'll have to knock it back with bombs; it retaliates by shooting large bursts of fire. We don't want to spoil the fight entirely, but we will say that Spaldera does have Dodongolike tendencies. This beast is just one of the reasons why we're so excited about The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword; players are bound to encounter hundreds (if not thousands) of reasons more when the final game is released in November.



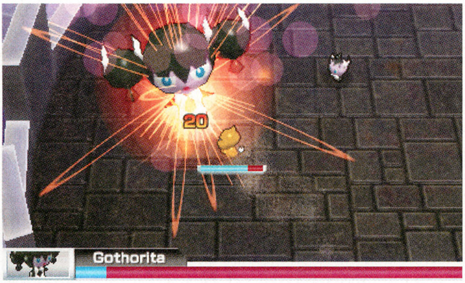


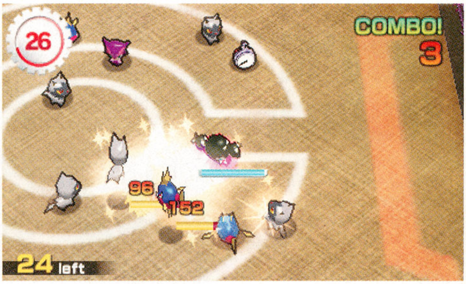
Ready to Rumble

In Nintendo's first 3D Pokémon adventure, Pokémon Rumble Blast, we learn that it's still cool to play with toys.

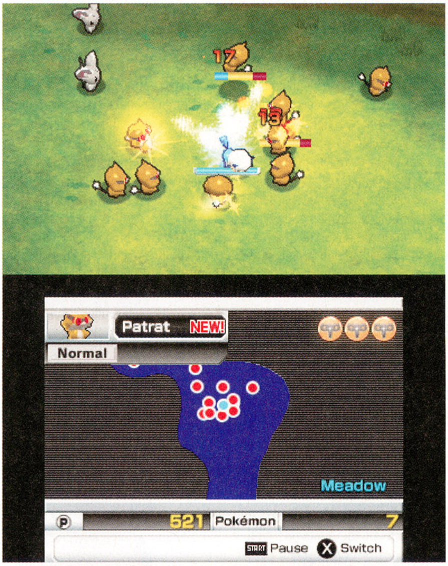
BY **PHIL THEOBALD**

PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO** DEVELOPER: **AMBRELLA** RELEASE: **OCTOBER 2011** **N3DS**





POKÉMON FANS will soon be able to get closer to Pikachu than ever before. Not literally, of course; scientists have yet to discover actual Pikachu in the wild (keep looking, though!). Instead, the Electric-type Pokémon and plenty of its pals will be popping out of gaming screens when Pokémon Rumble Blast arrives on the Nintendo 3DS handheld. The Pokémon franchise may have made its N3DS debut back in June with Pokédex 3D—a handy resource for Pokémon fanatics that shows off how great Pokémon can look in 3D—but the application isn't really a game in the traditional sense. With Pokémon Rumble Blast, however, players will finally be able to step into the world of Pokémon for an all-new adventure.



Tktk

SCREENSHOTS HAVE BEEN CAPTURED IN 2D MODE.

Unlike the RPG styling of the recent Pokémon Black Version and Pokémon White Version games, Pokémon Rumble Blast is primarily an action game that allows players to directly control the endearing Pokémon. These aren't the kinds of Pokémon that we're used to battling, catching, and training, though. Instead, the stars of the game are Toy Pokémon—wind-up versions of the characters we've grown to love over the past 13 years.

A CLOCKWORK PIKACHU

The game takes place in the imaginary realm of Toyland, where playthings come to life, have conversations, and embark on their own adventures. Unlike most Pokémon titles, there is no "star" of this game. Throughout your journey, you'll befriend dozens (if not hundreds) of new Pokémon, and each of them will prove to be a valuable asset. When the game begins, the goal is to simply travel to new areas within Toyland and recruit Pokémon to your team. Soon, however, a nefarious plot is revealed. The centerpiece of the first town, the aptly named Toy Town, is the Glowing Fountain. Glowdrops, life-giving fluid that fills the fountain, are starting to go missing. Without these drops, the Toy Pokémon that inhabit the land are in big trouble. Obviously, it's up to you to discover the culprit behind this crime. Could it be the troublesome Pawniard, who teases you with the traditional Pokémon rival taunt of "Smell ya later," or is there a greater threat at work here?

To discover the truth, you'll have to do a lot of battling. Pokémon veterans will quickly notice that the structure of Pokémon Rumble Blast is rather different from other games in the series. The story is broken up into chapters, each with a handful of subsections. Within each chapter, you find yourself in an open field from which you're free to venture into a town or other area. The towns are just what you would expect—there are other Pokémon with whom to chat, and shops where you can spend your hard-earned coins. The themed areas scattered throughout the land are where you'll do battle with wild Pokémon—and hopefully befriend a few.

BE THE VERY BEST

Forget everything you know about Pokémon battles; there are no turn-based fights here. In order to win this game, you'll need quick reflexes above all else. Each area is viewed from a bird's-eye perspective, and as you follow the winding paths, you'll encounter several wild Pokémon simultaneously. You control only one Pokémon at a time, and it can be equipped with two different moves. There are no Power Points to worry about, so attack as much as you like. Enemies swarm you quickly, so there is little time to think: it's attack or be attacked in Toyland. When wild Pokémon are defeated, they leave behind coins that you can collect. Occasionally, instead of dropping a coin an enemy Pokémon reverts to a collectible toy form. Collecting the fallen foe

Shop 'til You Drop

The towns scattered throughout Toyland not only give you a place to rest your weary gears in between battles; they also provide the opportunity to drop some coin to upgrade your team. Here are some of the locations that you can visit.

Glowing Fountain

Stop off at this watering hole to refill your Toy Pokémon's energy.

Move-a-majig

Want to learn a new move? Drop a few coins in this machine to receive a new, random technique.

Move Vendor

No randomness here. You'll know which powerful move you're getting from this machine, but it's very expensive.

Collection

This is where you go to see the Toy Pokémon you've encountered and befriended.

Information

There are lots of statistics to keep track of in this game. This record hall lets you view them all.

Release Point

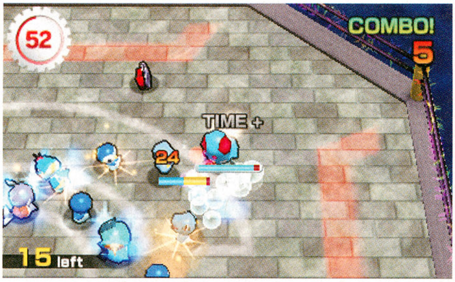
If you have more Toy Pokémon than you can handle, this is where you can release them back into the wild.

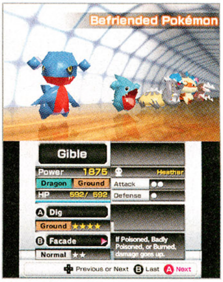
Shopscope

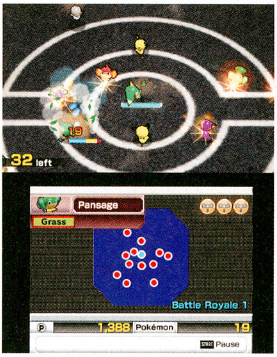
Go here to activate the game's StreetPass feature.

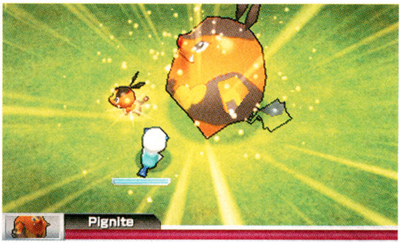
Two Player

When you're ready to bring a friend in on the fun, visit this building.







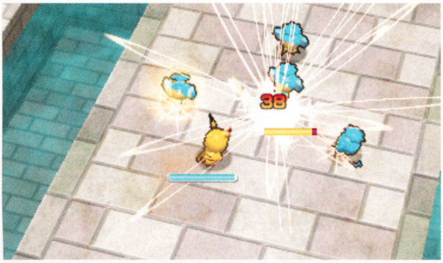


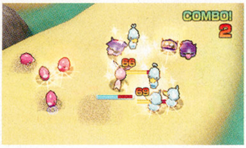
allows you to befriend the toy, allowing you to play as it.

There are more than 600 Pokémon to collect in all, including plenty from the newest entries in the saga, Pokémon Black Version and Pokémon White Version, but stars of the older Pokémon adventures make appearances as well. Remember when we said to forget everything you know about Pokémon battles? Well, hopefully you didn't forget *everything*. Although the structure of the fights is very different here, the basics are pretty much the same. Each Pokémon still has a type, giving it advantages and disadvantages over other Pokémon that they encounter. If a Water-type Pokémon goes up against a horde of Fire-type Pokémon, for instance, it will have a distinct advantage despite being outnumbered. (This is especially true if the Water-type Pokémon happens to know a Water-type move.) The area that you're in at the moment determines what kind of Pokémon you meet along the way. Traveling through a meadow will send more Grass-type Pokémon your way, whereas you're bound to see more Rock-type Pokémon in a cave.

Since you control only one Pokémon at a time, you'll have to be constantly aware of your surroundings when you go into battle. You're free to swap out your main Pokémon at will, so if you suddenly find yourself at a tactical disadvantage, it's wise to switch to a Pokémon that can better challenge the advancing forces. Just be aware that it takes a few seconds to fully "wind up" a Toy Pokémon before it joins the fray. You're vulnerable during this time, so attempting to swap characters while in the heat of battle can lead to a fallen toy. If a toy does run out of energy, don't fret too much. You can lose up to three toys in each area before getting the dreaded "game over." Maintaining a powerful team with several members and swapping them out at the proper moments can avoid that altogether, though.

Legions of wild Pokémon aren't the only obstacles. At the end of every stage, you'll face off against a Boss Pokémon. The boss is easy to identify—it gets wound up so much that it grows to a gigantic size. These





monstrous foes have some powerful moves and an endless supply of minions that help defend their leader. Without a type advantage, even skilled players will find themselves having trouble during these matches. Still, there's potential for a great reward upon beating the boss. When it goes down, it will drop a healthy supply of coins. If you're really lucky, though, it will also revert to its small toy form, allowing you to befriend it. Not surprisingly, the Boss Pokémon are some of the more formidable additions to your team.

THE POWER THAT'S INSIDE

Advancing to new areas leads to encounters with more-powerful enemies and results in befriending more-powerful Pokémon, as well. This is the key to building a strong team with a diverse set of skills. On its own, each area isn't terribly large. A skilled player can get through one in about five minutes. However, the areas are meant to be replayed multiple times. Although several Pokémon inhabit each area, you won't encounter all of them on just one play-through. Additionally, befriending a Pokémon happens randomly, so the odds are that you'll have to go through each area a few times before catching 'em all. Like the Pokémon RPGs, the collection aspect of Pokémon Rumble Blast is surprisingly addictive. You'll find yourself revisiting stages repeatedly in hopes that this will be the time you make buddies with an elusive critter.

Once you've built up a respectable team, it's time to put it to the test. When you think you're ready, head to one of the stadiums in Toyland to compete in the Battle Royale. These arena-based challenges will determine the true Pokémon masters. Due to the confined setting of the Battle Royale, the game changes slightly. With several opponents fighting in such a small space, there is nowhere to retreat. You must face adversity head-on. The rules of the game are also different in Battle Royale. No longer can you switch Pokémon on the fly if your character's health is running low. A Pokémon can leave the Battle Royale only when it is defeated. Go through three characters, and you'll have to restart the battle from scratch. There are also specific requirements for entering each Battle Royale. Many require that Pokémon be at least a certain level. Because Pokémon don't gain experience in Pokémon Rumble Blast as they do in the Pokémon RPGs, the only way to gain high-level Pokémon is to befriend them. Other Battle Royale arenas restrict the type of Pokémon that you can use to fight. For example, the third section of the game's first chapter contains three Battle Royale arenas—one that allows Fire-type Pokémon, one solely for Water-types, and one exclusively for Grass-types.

Like each of the regular areas, the Battle Royale arenas have Boss Pokémon. Before a match begins, you're given a silhouette preview of the main opponents you'll face. Toward the end of the Battle Royale, the Boss Pokémon will join the action. Although they aren't supersized like the area bosses, they are extremely powerful. Sadly, there's no chance of befriending them, but you still earn plenty of cash once they're defeated.

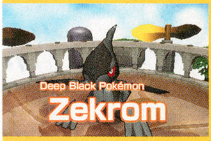
IT'S YOU AND ME

As involved as the game's adventure mode is, there are also two battle modes to choose from for an extra challenge. In Team Battle, you fight alongside two of your Toy Pokémon as you face off against numerous minibosses while working your way toward a confrontation with a Boss Pokémon. In the Charge Battle mode, two large battalions of Pokémon compete to see which team is the strongest.

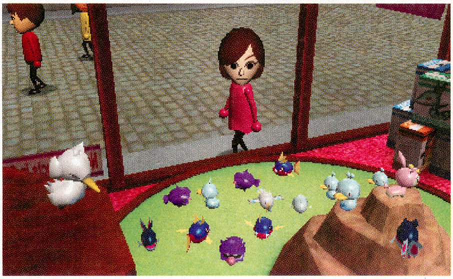
Between the frantic battles and the collection aspect, there's a lot to keep gamers busy here. Still, there's twice as much fun when a second player in involved. Pokémon Rumble Blast has a few ways to interact with other people while you play. Co-op modes are always fun, and with a local wireless connection, you and a friend can play through any area that both of you have already cleared in the single-player game. Not only will this give you extra backup during frenzied battles, but it increases the chance of befriending Toy Pokémon. Pokémon Rumble Blast also supports the Nintendo 3DS system's StreetPass feature, letting players challenge the Toy Pokémon that nearby players have befriended as well as view customized Mii characters within the game.

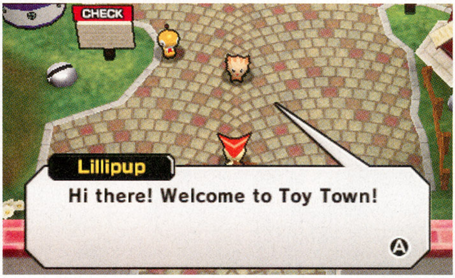
Pokémon Rumble Blast is definitely not a traditional Pokémon game, but it's every bit as exciting. With its action-packed quest, cooperative play features, hundreds of Pokémon to collect, and colorful 3D graphics, we can't wait to play with these toys.

Who's the Boss?



There are plenty of Boss Pokémon to challenge in Pokémon Rumble Blast. Usually they're evolved forms of Pokémon that you've already encountered on your journey, but you might run into a few Legendary Pokémon as well. This is but a sampling of the powerful opponents you'll face.



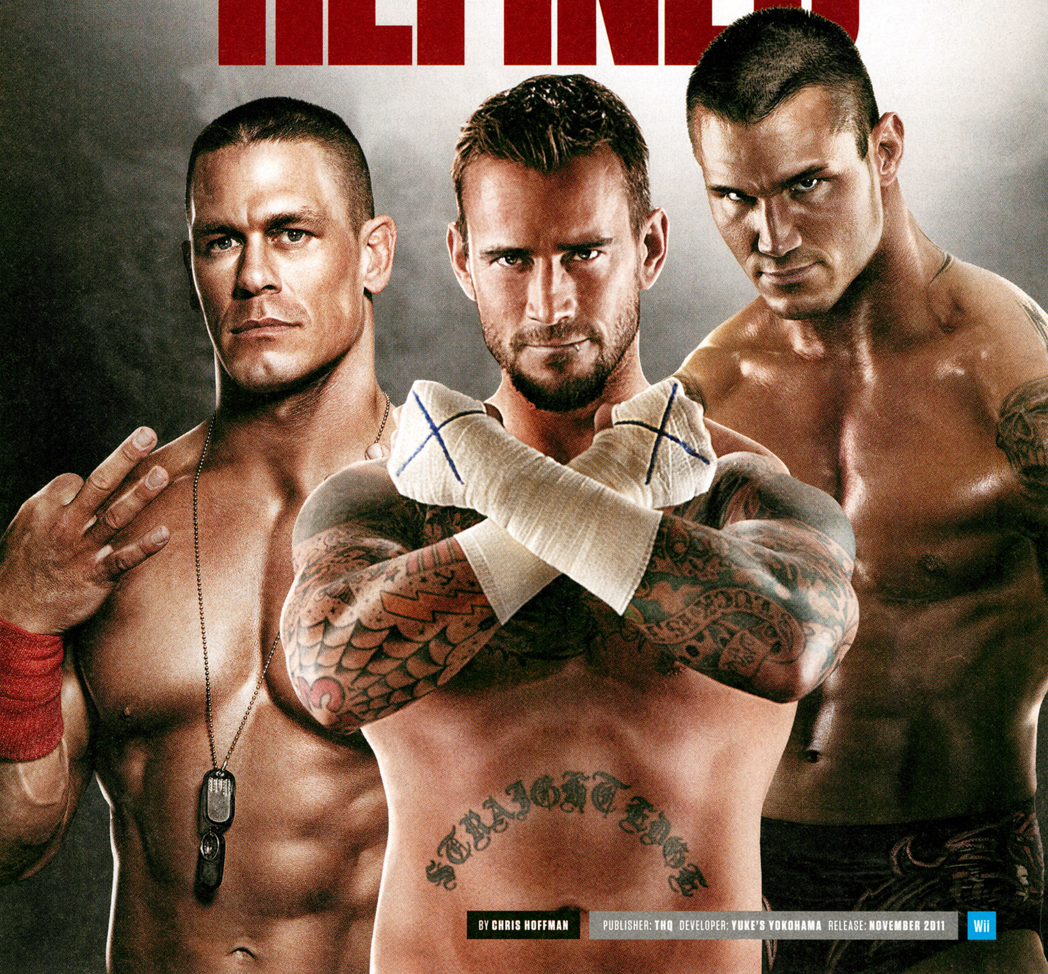


Lillipup
Hi there! Welcome to Toy Town!

SCREENSHOTS HAVE BEEN CAPTURED IN 2D MODE.

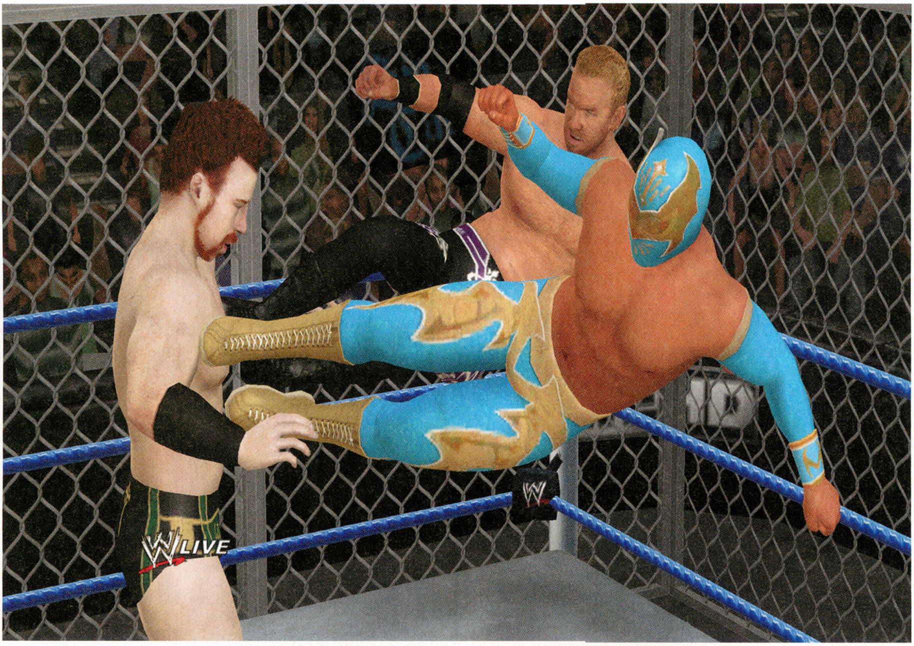
THQ shakes up the wrestling video game landscape with **WWE '12** for Wii.

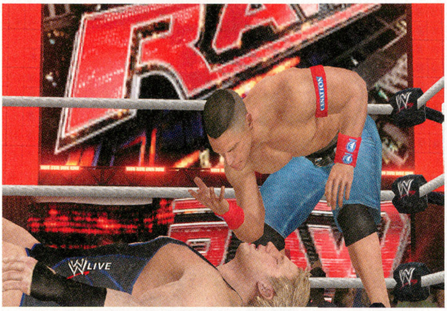
WRESTLING REFINED



BY **CHRIS HOFFMAN**

PUBLISHER: **THQ** DEVELOPER: **YUKE'S YOKOHAMA** RELEASE: **NOVEMBER 2011** **Wii**





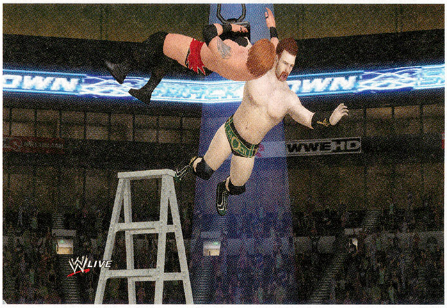
IN THE WORLD of professional wrestling, a little change is good. Feuds, gimmicks, storylines—if they last too long, they run the risk of becoming stale and boring the audience. Furthermore, change can often lead to something that captures the imagination of millions of fans around the world. That's why after years of delivering annual installments of its WWE SmackDown vs. Raw series, THQ and Yuke's have spent the last year tweaking, polishing, and adjusting, and have returned with WWE '12—a game that will hopefully improve upon established conventions and give gamers a more satisfying wrestling sim than they've ever played before.

THE PREDATOR STRIKES

"WWE '12 celebrates the rebirth of our franchise through a bigger game, badder presentation, and even better gameplay," states game designer Bryan Williams. "We're delivering long-awaited critical improvements to the core gameplay experience, delivering the most creative and extensive feature set to date, and offering a more visceral, edgy, and polished presentation."

Make no mistake—if you liked the SmackDown vs. Raw games, you'll feel right at home with WWE '12; the developers haven't done anything extreme, like scrapping and rebuilding the game engine or anything like that. They have, however, thoroughly enhanced the game engine with what THQ has dubbed "Predator Technology," which is a new renderer that delivers better graphics and improved animation.

"By harnessing our new Predator Technology," explains Williams, "we've been able to greatly enhance the visual quality of the game. Our new renderer delivers a sharper resolution and greater texture detail to create the most realistic WWE superstars, divas, and legends ever seen in digital form. The player's eyes can now stay intently focused on the WWE superstars and the action in the ring. With each slam and impact that hits, the ring comes alive with fierce and realistic movement that was nonexistent in previous games. In the past, one of

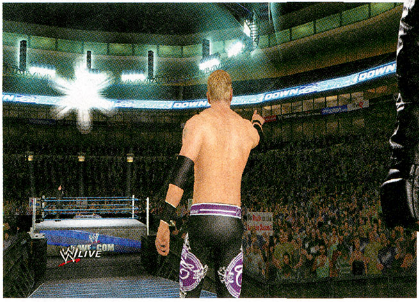


the biggest complaints about the franchise was the clumsy animation transitions and blending between moves. New Predator Technology also features new blending technology that enables us to deliver seamless transitions between moves, creating a much more responsive, fluid, and realistic experience that keeps the action moving."

The new tech allows for a much more true-to-life presentation, as previously canned animation sequences should unfold much more naturally. You'll now be able to interrupt moves—say, clothesline John Cena into next week while he's attempting to deliver a Five-Knuckle Shuffle—and augment complex moves (for example, deliver a top-rope elbow drop to an opponent who's in the middle of receiving Rey Mysterio's 619/finisher combo) to create your own unique brand of offense in multi-person matches.

OF RINGS AND RIVALRIES

Of course, one of the most captivating aspects of any wresting game is seeing what characters are included in the playable roster, and WWE '12 is no



SMACK TALK! WHY SHOULD PLAYERS PICK YOUR CHARACTER IN WWE '12?

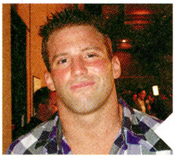
ALEX RILEY I believe I've had a better rookie year than anybody else has in WWE in a long time, I'm about to have the US title around my waist...and I'm the future of WWE. If you want to be a young rising superstar, and a good man, and a pillar of the community, then choose Alex Riley! [Laughs]

KELLY KELLY Because she's awesome? [Laughs] No, it's just so cool because the character in it is just like me. I mean, it's all my mannerisms, to a T—it's everything about me. So hopefully if they like me they'll want to play me.

NATALYA NEIDHART I think that all players should pick my character for the simple reason that Natalya is the best. I represent all things great. [Laughs] The fact that last year was such a successful year for me as the Divas Champion, and coming into 2012, trying to redefine the divas division as smart, sexy, and powerful—I think that people know that Natalya brings her A-game to the table. As far as being the best in the ring, I'm gonna be the best in the video game, hands down.

R-TRUTH Because I'm the Truth, man. I will set you free. By playin' this video game, you will be able to come along with me, feel better, look better, move better, and you will be able to unfold the conspiracy that has been holding me down since WWE '12 came out. Why am I just now in this one? Conspiracy! Cause Little Jimmy's been trying to hold me down for a long time.

WADE BARRETT The most exciting thing about this game is the fact that for the first time ever Wade Barrett is actually in the game. You can go out and buy it, and I'm in the game itself. The fact that I've never had an opportunity to do that before is pretty cool in itself, so obviously I'm thrilled to be a part of the game. I think my real-life character is the best character on the show and I think I'm the best performer on there, so I think the game is probably going to reflect that too.



ZACK RYDER Because I'm the ultimate broski! That's pretty much it. Zack Ryder is finally in the game! You know he's dominating; he's fist-pumping; he's taking care and spiking his hair; and I think everyone just wants to be Zack Ryder.

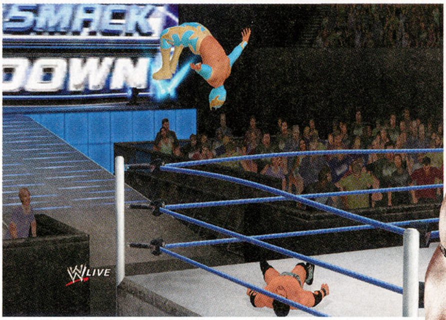
different. Alongside established main eventers like Randy Orton, Triple H, Big Show, CM Punk, and The Undertaker, the game includes somewhere in the neighborhood of a dozen newcomers who've never appeared on the Wii console before, including Wade Barrett and several former members of the Nexus stable.

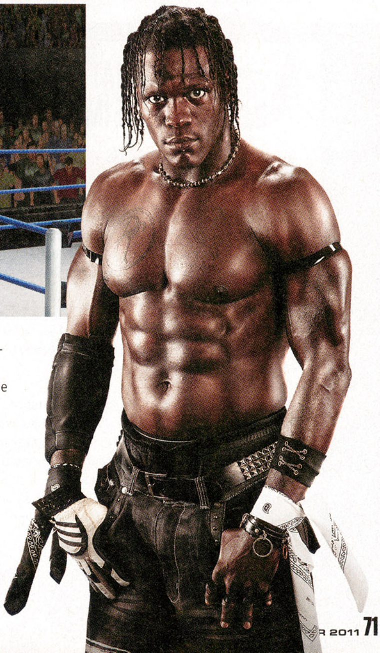
"This year, we have a bunch of new faces that I'm excited about," Williams shares. "Heath Slater, Daniel Bryan, Sin Cara, and Alberto Del Rio are but a small sample of some of the new faces players will find in WWE '12. I'm also extremely excited about The Rock being included in this year's game. Now, The Rock is no stranger to our franchise, but this will be the first time since SmackDown!: Here Comes the Pain that we'll have the current version of The Rock, tribal tattoos and all! I'm very, very pumped about his inclusion in this year's game."

To go with the updated roster there are several new character attributes to help differentiate each performer. Every wrestler is now rated in categories such as strike defense (how difficult it is to reverse or block incoming strikes), grapple defense (how difficult it is to reverse grapple attacks), adrenaline (how long a character can run without interruption), recovery (the speed at which a character is able to recover from an incapacitated state), toughness (how difficult it is to escape submission holds or succeed in Royal Rumble minigames), agility (speed and aerial range), and tag team (the level of damage caused by double-team moves).

Characters will also be able to stage dramatic comeback attempts if they find themselves on the wrong end of a beating during a match. Once your character has suffered critical damage to the head or torso, you'll be able to enter a comeback state if you press the A and B Buttons

[Below] Newcomers such as high-fliers Sin Cara and Justin Gabriel are making their Wii debuts in WWE '12.





on the Wii Remote controller, which will cause your character to enter a fired-up state and immediately jump to his feet (or perform a taunt if he's already standing). If you hit A and B again, you'll trigger a comeback minigame (in which you'll have to quickly hit specific buttons as their icons appear on the screen) to deliver a series of attacks; if you're successful, you'll be able to immediately execute your superstar's signature move, which can then be followed up with a finisher, thus turning the tide in your favor.

Comebacks are just one example of how matches will more closely resemble their TV counterparts. Players can also expect to see more TV-style camera angles, and to take part in authentically paced matches that move quickly in the early goings, then slow down as the contest progresses. Unfortunately, the commentary will also be authentic—Michael Cole will be just as annoying as he is on WWE programming.

VINTAGE ACTION

As touched on previously, many of the other changes to WWE '12 are subtle modifications to the existing gameplay, but they could go a long way in improving the experience. Though Wii Remote and Nunchuk controller users might not

[Right] The most electrifying man in sports entertainment, The Rock, is back! But will he include alternative attire that lets him dress up as a tooth fairy?

SMACK TALK!

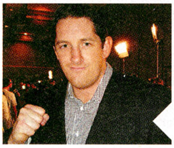
WHAT MEMORABLE MOMENT OF YOUR CAREER WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IMMORTALIZED IN A VIDEO GAME?

ALEX RILEY I think when I beat Miz at Capitol Punishment was an awesome moment for me in my career. I would re-create the match with him, pick the outfit I had on that night, choose his outfit, and then hit him with a finisher of my choice, so I think that would be really cool. As much as I hate to say it, the night that [Miz cashed in] Money in the Bank was [also] really cool for me. I was very new in my career, and I got to be a part of that. I was ringside as he became WWE Champion, and I think you can do that as well in the game.

KELLY KELLY Me winning the championship. [Laughs] But I only won it two months ago, so hopefully [it will be in the game] next year. That would be awesome.

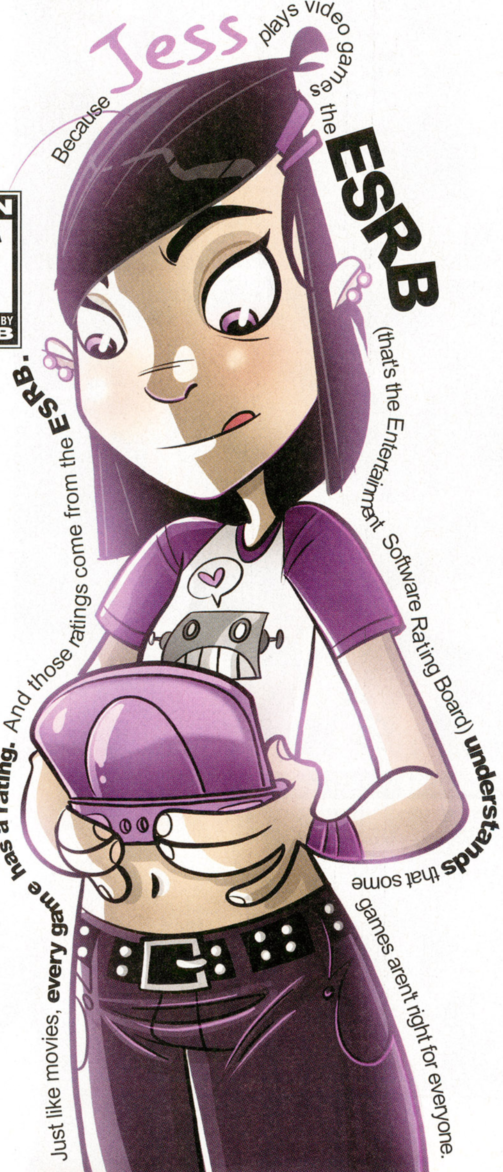
NATALYA NEIDHART This is a little-known fact, but when I did the tables, ladders, and chairs match with my partner Beth Phoenix against Lay-Cool, Triple H really helped me come up with one of the most unique things I've ever done in the ring, and that was putting the sharpshooter on both Michelle and Layla. That's never really been revealed to anyone actually, so you're getting the first! So I'd love to see that; I'd love to put the sharpshooter on two people at the same time. Maybe on Maryse, and maybe Eve.

R-TRUTH Wow, I got so many of them. Probably my debut into this business, into this sport that we love. I debuted with Road Dogg—that was a great moment for me, man—that was like stepping into the realm of your biggest dream, your biggest inspiration, your biggest everything. I'd like to have that immortalized in a video game. I could live it over and over again.



WADE BARRETT Most people seem to really enjoy watching the Nexus invasion from June of last year, where a group of eight of us came down and destroyed the RAW set and attacked John Cena. So just based on public opinion I'd love to see that immortalized in the game and re-created in the game. I think that'd be really cool.

ZACK RYDER Maybe when Curt Hawkins and I won the WWE tag-team title. That was definitely my career moment. It was in Long Island, where I'm from; my family was there—my friends and fans. It was awesome.



Because **Jess** plays video games the **ESRB** (that's the Entertainment Software Rating Board) **understands** that some games aren't right for everyone.

Just like movies, **every game has a rating.** And those ratings come from the **ESRB.**

TEEN

T

CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

© 2006 ESRB. All rights reserved.

www.ESRB.org

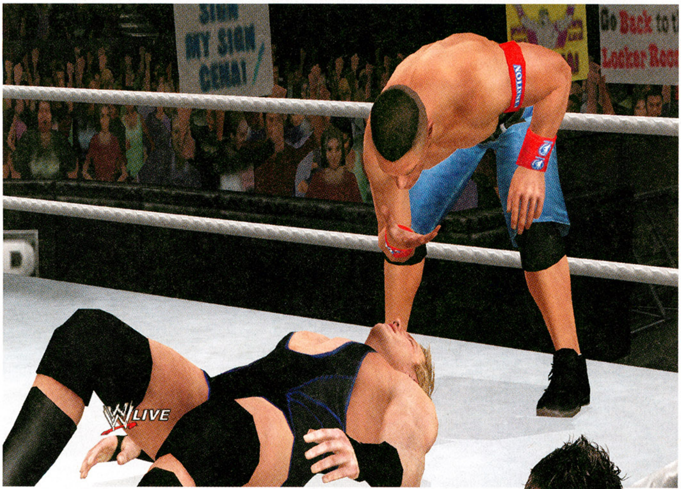
RULERS OF THE RING

As of press time, 62 playable characters have been revealed for WWE '12. It's already one of the most impressive rosters in wrestling game history, but THQ is intending to include more than 70 grapplers in all, including a few additional big names.

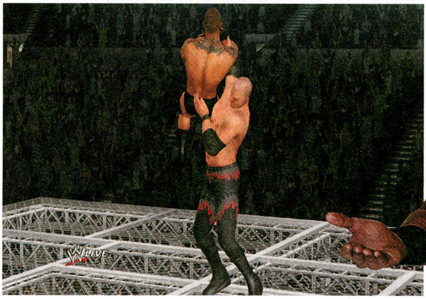
SUPERSTARS:
Alberto Del Rio
Alex Riley
Big Show
Chavo Guerrero
Christian
CM Punk
Cody Rhodes
Daniel Bryan
David Otunga
Dolph Ziggler
Drew McIntyre
Evan Bourne
Ezekiel Jackson
Goldust
Heath Slater
Husky Harris
Jack Swagger
John Cena
John Morrison
Justin Gabriel
Kane
Kofi Kingston
Mark Henry
Mason Ryan
Michael McGillicutty
The Miz
R-Truth
Randy Orton
Rey Mysterio
The Rock
Santino Marella
Sheamus
Sin Cara
Ted DiBiase
Triple H
Tyson Kidd
The Undertaker
Vince McMahon
Vladimir Kozlov
Wade Barrett
William Regal
Yoshi Tatsu
Zack Ryder

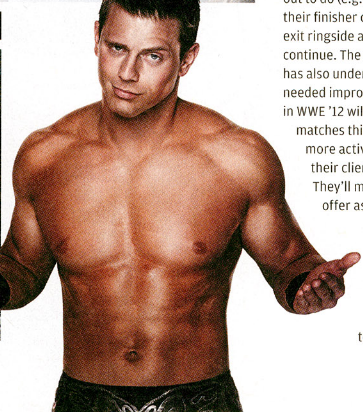
LEGENDS:
Arn Anderson
Booker T
Demolition's Ax
Demolition's Smash
Eddie Guerrero
Edge
Kevin Nash
Ricky "The Dragon" Steamboat
Road Warrior Animal
Road Warrior Hawk
"Stone Cold" Steve Austin
Vader

DIVAS:
Beth Phoenix
Eve
Kelly Kelly
Layla
Maryse
Michelle McCool
Natalya Neidhart



[Below] What's worse than a chokeslam? A chokeslam on top of a cage.

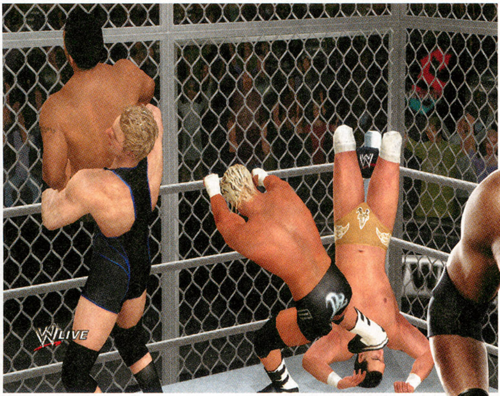




notice, the game is reverting to a button-based grappling scheme; if you're using the Classic controller or GameCube controller, that means you'll simply press a button (instead of flicking the right analog stick like in the last few iterations of SmackDown vs. Raw) to perform grapple moves. Likewise, you'll rapidly mash buttons to force your opponents to tap out to submission moves, just like in the wrestling games of yore.

And while for years players have been able to execute certain moves to attack specific body parts (say, an ankle lock to wear down the legs), you'll now be able to do so more effectively than ever thanks to the ability to modify your grapple to target your opponent's limbs. "The new Limb-Targeting System is actually one of my favorite new features in this year's game," proclaims Williams, "as it lends the game an element of strategy that has been lacking in previous efforts. Critically damaging an opponent's leg in order to reduce walking speed and impair running never gets old. It's extremely satisfying working over a body part in order to attain an offensive advantage over an opponent."

Artificial intelligence has received a lot of attention, as well, especially when it comes to managers and meddlesome superstars who interfere in matches. "Last year's effort was plagued with some pretty bothersome AI bugs insofar as interfering superstars were concerned," Williams admits. "I'm happy to report that these bugs are being stamped out as we speak! When superstars interfere in WWE '12, they'll do so with a reason and clear purpose. If they're not able to achieve what it is they ran out to do (e.g., break up a pin, hit their finisher on someone), they'll exit ringside and the match will continue. The manager system has also undergone some much-needed improvements. Managers in WWE '12 will play a larger role in matches this year, as they'll be more active in ensuring that their client wins their match. They'll mount the apron and offer assistance to their client (resulting in a momentum gain) and they'll also seek to attack their client's opponent if they wander too close. All in all,



manager behavior in WWE '12 is a lot more authentic to how managers behave in the actual WWE!"

DOMINATION IS IN THE DETAILS

The list of enhancements goes on and on. Other modifications include tougher opponents on Hard and Legend difficulty settings, a revamped momentum system (now you don't lose momentum, even if you're taking a pounding), improved timing windows for reversing attacks, special taunts that lure weakened opponents into finishing moves, and—due to numerous fan requests—the return of the ability to defend championship belts in exhibition matches.

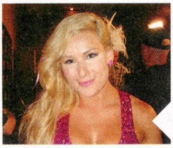
Speaking of exhibition matches, WWE '12 has no shortage of variety in that department. There are more than 80 match types in all (including favorites such as cage matches, ladder matches, table matches, and Hell in a Cell), many

SMACK TALK!

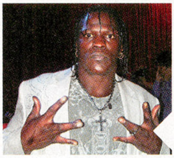
WHAT KIND OF A STORYLINE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE PLAYERS CREATE FOR YOUR CHARACTER IN WWE '12?

ALEX RILEY I would love to have a feud with John Cena. I think if they would pair me against John—maybe I could come out and cut a promo against John or something like that, and then meet him at WrestleMania. I've kind of followed his work for a long time, and he's been on top for a long time, so that's where I plan on being. I hopefully will one day be the face of the company, so why not start through the video game?

KELLY KELLY I would love to see me get involved with one of the male superstars. Maybe like Alex Riley or something like that—maybe like a little love story. That would be awesome.



NATALYA NEIDHART WWE doesn't have it yet, but one thing I'd love to see or be a part of in a video game would be an imaginary Divas Tag-Team Championship with myself and Beth Phoenix, the Glamazon, being the first-ever Divas Tag-Team Champions. All of us divas do so many tag matches, so I think it'd be so unique to have that in the game. Of course, everybody would have us—myself and the Glamazon, the Divas of Doom—beat up all the divas on both rosters.



R-TRUTH I'd like to see them create a storyline where R-Truth unfolds the conspiracy that's been against him since he got into WWE '12. R-Truth gets the conspiracy unfolded, he becomes WWE champ, and then everybody lives together and gets to be together, and it's all peace.

WADE BARRETT If players created a storyline for me, I'd be on the Road to WrestleMania to take on The Undertaker and defeat him for his streak. I mean, he's 19 and 0 at the moment—he's somebody that really is at the top of his game and he's been at the top of his game for 20 years. And he's someone I was a big fan of when I was younger. He's still around now and still able to perform on a very top level. So I think if gamers can create that Road to WrestleMania story that culminates in me taking on The Undertaker, beating him for the streak, I think that would be my favorite thing that could possibly happen in the game.

ZACK RYDER Maybe a relationship with Kelly Kelly. Maybe askin' her out, go on a couple dates, stuff like that; maybe she could be my manager. So that would be pretty cool, I think.

SMACK TALK!

WHAT TYPE OF MATCH WOULD YOU LIKE TO COMPETE IN IN A VIDEO GAME THAT YOU WOULDN'T OR COULDN'T IN REAL LIFE?

ALEX RILEY I got into this business because I kind of like this stuff. The crazier it gets, the better for me. I really do enjoy taking the risk and trying to do things that are a little risky and a little unbelievable at times. The ladder matches are really cool to be involved in, and if they could do a hardcore table-and-chairs match, that'd be awesome.

KELLY KELLY I'm a risk-taker, so I would love to have a cage match and jump off the cage, or a ladder match and do a backflip onto the floor. You know, anything crazy like that; that'd be really cool.

NATALYA NEIDHART There is a match that I would love to have in the video game, and that would be the first-ever divas ladder match. And I think there's only one diva that I would go toe-to-toe and nose-to-nose with in a ladder match, and that would be Beth Phoenix. Love her, but in the video game it'd be every diva for themselves.

R-TRUTH That's a hard one, man. There are so many circumstances and situations you could be in. Probably [I'd face] John Cena, because he's the leader of the conspiracy against me. You know about that? Probably that one. I'd unfold the conspiracy that John Cena leads against me. [It'd be] an Unfold-the-Conspiracy Match. No count-outs, pinfalls anywhere—almost like a street fight type. It'd have to be a street fight, because this is business right here. There'd have to be tables. And Little Jimmy can't come!

WADE BARRETT I'd like to set up a match between myself and "The British Bulldog" Davey Boy Smith. He was my idol when I was a kid, and he was one of the main reasons I became a WWE superstar. So I'd love to create his character and take him on in a match, whether it's a straight-up match, or a no-disqualifications match, or a cage match—anything like that.

ZACK RYDER In real life I've never been in the Hell in a Cell, so I'd definitely like to play that in the game with Zack Ryder. Zack Ryder versus anybody would be a pretty interesting and exciting match, that's for sure. Woo woo woo, you know it.

supporting up to four players. And if you're looking for something more long-term to sink your teeth into, the game promises to include all-new Road to WrestleMania story modes (containing more than 12 hours of gameplay) and an updated never-ending Universe mode that lets you put together your own matches and establish your own feuds. And if that's not enough, you can always create your own wrestlers, teams, storylines, move sets, and finishing maneuvers via the game's unparalleled customization options.

THQ representatives claim that all of these modifications and updates will make WWE '12 "bigger, badder, and better" than any wrestling game that's come before—but as wrestling fans know, that's nothing but talk until it's backed up in the ring. We'll find out if the game provides the hard-hitting action that grappling fans crave when it hits on November 22.

COMIC HEROES

THE MAGAZINE ALL COMICS FANS HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR...

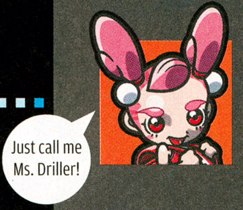
3 FREE GIFTS!
SIDEKICK COMIC
READ NEW STRIPS FROM BRYAN TALBOT, PAT MILLS, EDDIE CAMPBELL AND MORE!
HELLBOY BPRD SEW-ON PATCH
GIANT DOUBLE SIDED POST
COMICS • GRAPHIC NOVELS • MOVIES • TV • GAMES
NEW! ISSUE TWO
COMIC HEROES
CAPTAIN AMERICA LIVES!
THE NEW MOVIE, THE COMICS, THE CLASSIC STORIES – EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW!
"I'M RI TH
ALAN
GREEN LANTERN/ GREEN ARROW
Their classic '70s road trip revisited
DEVIL INSIDE
Mike Mignola talks all things Hellboy
COMICS CRAZY! THE ONLY MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO ALL THINGS COMICS!
PLUS!
PREACHER NEMESIS THE WARLOCK CHARLIE ADLARD
STAN LEE HOW TO WRITE COMICS AND
The FLASH
AFTER THE BLACKEST NIGHT COMES THE BRIGHTEST DAY
BUREAU FOR PARANORMAL RESEARCH AND DEFENSE
PLUS!
NEW!
SIDEKICK
THE BEST NEW COMICS PREVIEWED INSIDE!
Featuring...
GRANDVILLE MON AMOUR By BRYAN TALBOT
THE PLAYWRIGHT By EDDIE CAMPBELL & DAREN WHITE
AMERICAN REAPER By PAT MILLS & CLINT LANGLEY
Plus! THE RAINBOW ORCHID, DORIS DANGER GIANT MONSTER ADVENTURES, NOT ONE MINUTE OF SILENCE & URBAN BEASTS

3 FREE GIFTS!

- Giant double sided poster
- BPRD sew-on patch
- Sidekick sampler comic

COMIC HEROES ISSUE 2 ON SALE NOW

WWW.COMICHEROESMAGAZINE.COM

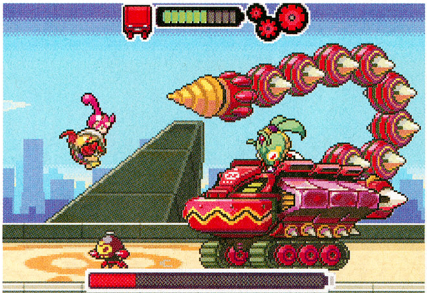

Just call me Ms. Driller!

GAME BOY ADVANCE
DRILL DOZER
INCLUDES RUMBLE FEATURE!

Drill Dozer

She's cute; she's feisty; she's the queen of destruction. Nothing gets in Jill's way!

PLATFORM: **GAME BOY ADVANCE**
PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**
DEVELOPER: **GAME FREAK**
RELEASE DATE: **FEBRUARY 2006**
COVERED IN ISSUES: **199, 201, 202**
OPTIMUM NUMBER OF GEARS: **3**



Although it's filled with walking bombs and giant robot scorpion tanks, Jill's adventure is pretty boring. (Get it? *Boring*? That's a drill pun.)

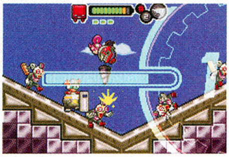
Talk about bad timing. Drill Dozer was released for GBA in the US in February 2006, at which time the Nintendo DS has already been on the market for over a year. Not surprisingly, with the shiny new dual-screened handheld already in gamers' hands, people weren't lining up to play a new Game Boy Advance title. This caused Drill Dozer to slip under a lot of players' radars. It's a shame, too, because the game is pretty darn outstanding.

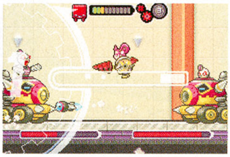
Not only is it a good game; it's a good game with a pedigree. It was developed by Game Freak, the creator of the beloved Pokémon series. Unlike those role-playing games, however, Drill Dozer is an action-packed platformer. Even so, the developer's tradition of refined gameplay and memorable characters shines through.

The star of the game is Jill, the de facto leader of a team known at the Red Dozers. Jill's father, the usual leader, was incapacitated in an attack by a rival gang known as the Skullkers. With her father out of commission and the Skullkers in possession of her family's red diamond, Jill straps herself into the titular walking tank and sets out for revenge.

For a roly-poly piece of machinery, the Drill Dozer packs a powerful punch. Its main weapon is, of course, the massive drill that extends from its front. Utilizing the drill requires a bit more input from the player than most video game weapons. It's triggered by the GBA system's shoulder buttons, and by collecting extra cogs that are hidden throughout the mazelike stages, the Dozer can be shifted into multiple gears. Each gear makes the attack more powerful and prolonged, allowing Jill to burrow through just about any enemy, obstacle, or wall.

Although seemingly simple, this clever mechanic adds quite a bit to the game, making the player feel more closely connected to the action. It's also easy to get caught up in the storyline, which is filled with humorous dialogue that's complemented by the charming (and occasionally hilarious) character animation. If you missed Drill Dozer when it was first released, track down a copy and experience this overlooked modern classic. —**PHIL T.**



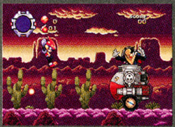


WHOLE LOTTA SHAKIN'

The Drill Dozer cartridge looks different from other GBA games. In addition to being a reddish-brown color, it's larger than standard carts. Once you start playing, you'll feel the difference, too: it's one of two GBA titles (WarioWare: Twisted! is the other) that sports a rumble feature. Whenever the dozer's drill is activated, the cartridge vibrates. This little touch really adds to the feeling that you're piloting a dangerous piece of machinery.

FREAKED OUT

Drill Dozer wasn't Game Freak's first foray into the world of platform gaming. In 1994, the developer created Pulseman for the Sega Genesis. In it, you play as a half-human/half-AI construct on a mission to stop your deranged creator from taking over the world. Pulseman attacks with an electric blast, which can also be harnessed to ricochet through each stage. Although it was originally available only in Japan, gamers everywhere can now enjoy Pulseman via the Wii Virtual Console.



HAVE A FAVORITE CLASSIC GAME YOU'D LIKE TO SEE REVISITED?
Send us your requests—we'll consider them for a future installment of Playback. nintendopower@futureus.com

REVIEWS

IN-DEPTH REVIEWS OF ALL THE LATEST GAMES

IN THIS SECTION

Wii

FIFA SOCCER 12 pg.86

KIRBY'S RETURN TO DREAM LAND pg.80

RUNE FACTORY: TIDES OF DESTINY pg.86

NINTENDO DS

ALIENS: INFESTATION pg.85

HARVEST MOON: THE TALE OF TWO TOWNS DS pg.84

PROFESSOR LAYTON AND THE LAST SPECTER pg.82

NINTENDO 3DS

DOCTOR LAUTREC AND THE FORGOTTEN KNIGHTS pg.84

FIFA SOCCER 12 pg.86

HARVEST MOON: THE TALE OF TWO TOWNS 3D pg.84

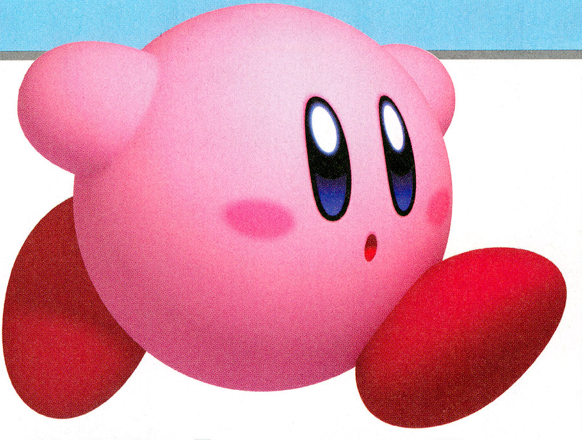
NIKOLI'S PENCIL PUZZLE pg.84

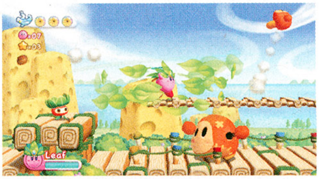
PET ZOMBIES pg.86

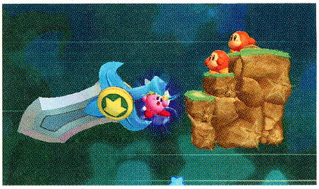
TETRIS AXIS pg.83

THOR: GOD OF THUNDER pg.83

The pink puffball goes back to his roots in Kirby's Return to Dream Land for Wii—and he brought friends!







A Welcome Return

KIRBY'S RETURN TO DREAM LAND

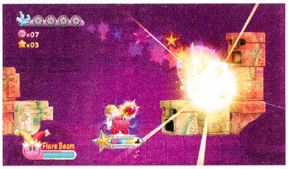
RATING: 8.5

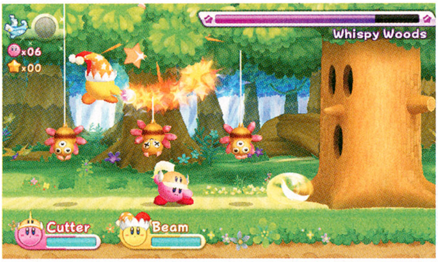
PLATFORM: **Wii**
PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**
DEVELOPER: **HAL LABORATORY**
ESRB: **EVERYONE 10+**

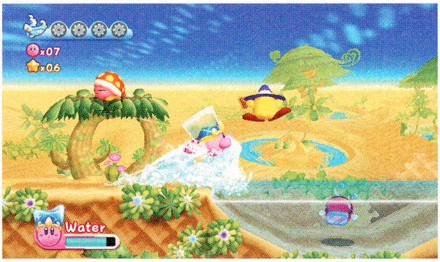
Kirby's back! Well, technically Kirby himself didn't go anywhere; he was turned into fabric in Kirby's Epic Yarn and he was split into 10 smaller puffballs in Kirby Mass Attack (two undeniably great games). But the traditional ability-copying Kirby I've known and loved since the NES days has finally made a comeback in the aptly titled Kirby's Return to Dream Land. (And before you fans send your letters, I know the pink puffball debuted in Kirby's Dream Land for the original Game Boy, but he was incapable of taking enemies' powers until Kirby's Adventure for the NES.)

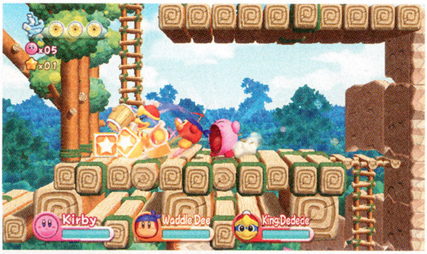
Kirby's not alone in this side-scrolling journey, though—the hammer-swinging King Dedede, the sword-slashing Meta Knight, and the spear-thrusting Waddle Dee accompany the rose-hued hero this time around. The foursome is playing on their home planet of Pop Star when a massive ship called the *Lor Starcutter* crash-lands. Kirby and his pals discover the pilot, a seemingly amiable alien named Magolor, and offer to help him find the five vital parts of his vessel that have been scattered across Pop Star. (This isn't the entire adventure, but I'm trying to avoid spoiling things.) In order to achieve this goal you assume the role of Kirby, and up to three friends can join you as either Kirby's three buddies (one player per character, so you can't have, say, three Meta Knights flying around) or as a yellow, a blue, and a green Kirby. No matter which characters you select, the controls are simple: holding the Wii Remote controller sideways, you move around with the Control Pad, jump with 2 (and tap 2 to fly), and use abilities with 1. You guard with A, which is the only minor irritation I have with the controls. Perhaps moving that function to B would make things easier during the heat of battle, as you would not have to move your thumb off of the Control Pad to block.

The four-person gameplay—reminiscent of New Super Mario Bros. Wii—can get a bit chaotic at times, but it's always fun and mostly beneficial. For instance, if you're in dire straits and can't make it to health-replenishing food for whatever reason, a partner can consume some food himself and share it with you via hugging (it's adorable). Facing bosses by yourself can be challenging, but it's made exponentially easier when your friends chip in. These encounters prove the worth of King Dedede, Meta Knight, and Waddle Dee. You might assume that it would be best for every-









Energy Unlocked

You don't collect Energy Spheres for the heck of it—the more spheres you acquire, the more rooms you can unlock on the *Lor Starcutter.* These include four Copy Ability Rooms wherein you can try out the various Copy Abilities in the game, and seven Copy Ability Challenge Rooms in which you have a Copy Ability to master. These challenges will put your skills to the test—using your given Copy Ability, you defeat baddies and collect coins as fast as you can in an effort to earn a gold medal. In addition to these Copy Ability-centric rooms, you can unlock two minigames on Magolor's ship: Ninja Dojo, which has you and up to three pals swing the Wii Remote controller to throw shuriken at targets, and Scope Shot, a light-gun-style game that has up to four players shoot giant robots.

one to play as a Kirby. After all, Kirby has access to all the Copy Abilities and the environment-devastating Super Abilities, and he can use the new Super Inhale talent to vacuum up special blocks. But King Dedede, Meta Knight, and Waddle Dee have a weapon with them at all times (whereas Kirby can lose his copied ability if he gets hit), which makes boss battles more manageable than they would be otherwise. Furthermore, each of these three amigos has advantages when playing through the game's eight areas: King Dedede can break bricks that can be destroyed only with a hammer; Waddle Dee can hit foes from a distance by thrusting or throwing his spear, and Meta Knight's wide sword swipes can take out multiple enemies at once. And a nice thing about the multiplayer is the way the game handles how the characters fit on the screen; the camera is centered on Kirby at all times, and the other characters are teleported to Kirby's side if they get too far ahead or fall too far behind, meaning characters cannot die from being offscreen.

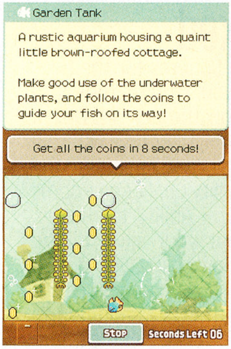
The disadvantage of playing with other people is that everyone shares a pool of lives, so a lesser-skilled buddy who keeps on dying can mean game over for the whole team. (If this aforementioned buddy is playing as the main Kirby, it will be even more annoying, as you are sent back to the last door you went through if the pink protagonist is taken out of commission.) Thankfully, if players want some help getting through a level, they can hop onto the back of a more-skilled player—it's amusing to see a totem pole of four characters navigating the environment.

The level of difficulty is clearly higher than that of Kirby's Epic Yarn (a game in which you could never die), but Kirby's Return to Dream Land does a good job of ramping things up slowly. The amount of challenge doesn't get crazy until a handful of the last levels—and even then, most gamers should be able to get through the adventure without too much trouble. The real difficulty comes from trying to find and collect all 120 Energy Spheres; it can become frustrating—especially if an Energy Sphere is protected by something lethal, such as a piece of the environment that can crush you and kill you instantly—but it's a worthwhile endeavor (see the sidebar).

Despite the fact that Kirby's Return to Dream Land doesn't have the unique visual qualities of Kirby's Epic Yarn (but what game does), I think this is one of the most graphically impressive Kirby games to date. This title feels like the natural progression of the classic Kirby aesthetics—evolving from 2D sprites to 3D polygons—and adds a number of small visual touches, such as the air distortion from Kirby's inhalation or the way Kirby jiggles while he walks when he has something in his mouth or the wind rustling the grass in the title screen. Of course, the bulk of the game looks great, too, but I really appreciate the attention to the little details. I do wish there was a bit more visual variety when it comes to the enemies, though, particularly with regard to the minibosses.

That said, any issues I have with Kirby's Return to Dream Land are relatively minor; this is an exceptional title, whether you're a longtime Kirby fan or not. Plus, it's one of the best ways to introduce newbies to the pink puffball, as the top-notch multiplayer allows veterans to work side-by-side with rookies. I've enjoyed almost all the entries in the Kirby franchise, but Kirby's Return to Dream Land is easily one of the all-time best. —**JUSTIN C.**

x07
x34
Fire

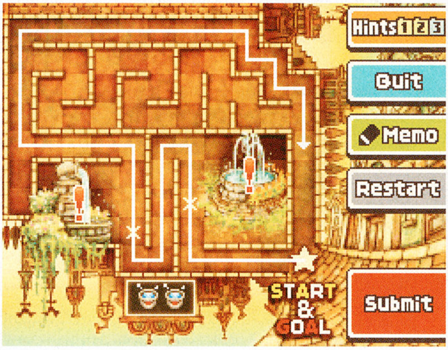


Garden Tank

A rustic aquarium housing a quaint little brown-roofed cottage.

Make good use of the underwater plants, and follow the coins to guide your fish on its way!

Get all the coins in 8 seconds!



Emmy

Judging by his expression, I'd say you've impressed Luke with your powers of observation, Professor.

Another Puzzle Solved

PROFESSOR LAYTON AND THE LAST SPECTER

RATING: 8.5

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO DS**
PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**
DEVELOPER: **LEVEL-5**
ESRB: **EVERYONE 10+**

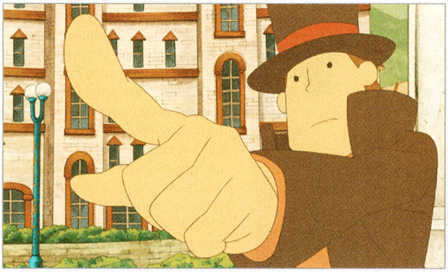
Now that the Professor Layton series has reached its fourth installment, players know what to expect from games starring the top-hat-wearing English gentleman: interesting characters, intriguing mysteries, top-notch production values, and loads upon loads of puzzles. Professor Layton and the Last Specter follows the formula to a T, and without a lot of game-changing innovation in the main story mode, the title has to rely on the quality of its components to convince players to take another journey into Layton's unique world.

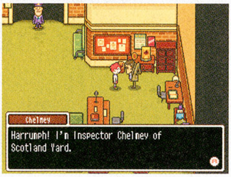
Luckily, Level-5 continues to deliver across the board. Having reached an emotional climax in last year's Professor Layton and the Unwound Future, the saga now takes us a few years into the past, allowing us to witness how Professor Hershel Layton met and befriended his soon-to-be-apprentice Luke Triton while looking into a mysterious tale about a giant, unearthly specter wreaking havoc on the village of Misthallery. The game introduces us to interesting new characters, too, including Luke's father Clark, a prankster known as the Black Raven, and the professor's new assistant Emmy, who's probably the game's most memorable new face due to her penchant for roundhouse-kicking people as if she were a female Chuck Norris. Unfortunately, the game's new villain, a dandy by the name of Descole, falls pretty flat.

On the other hand, Last Specter's story is remarkably solid. The answers to a few of the riddles are plainly obvious, but the tale still contains plenty of turns and surprises that will keep you guessing. Just don't expect the same kind of emotional payoff found in Unwound Future; despite a clear effort to create some tear-jerker moments, the scenario and characters involved simply can't match the resonance that was found in Layton's previous adventure.

The most important part of a Professor Layton game, however, is arguably the puzzles, and the game succeeds in that department. There's plenty of diversity (including math, word, spatial-reasoning, jigsaw, and logic puzzles), and though some of the puzzle types (most notably peg solitaire and the maze/moving-block puzzles) have been in previous Layton games, the challenges feel pretty fresh overall. There are a lot of puzzles hidden off the beaten path, which promotes exploration more than ever before. Additionally, there's a slate of fun new minigames, although they feel very much like the ones in Unwound Future.

Despite all the similarities to its predecessors (which isn't necessarily a problem), Professor Layton and the Last Specter does have one standout feature that's unlike anything seen in the series before: the Professor Layton's London Life mode. While it doesn't contain any of the cerebral gameplay that the Layton titles are known for, the mode allows you to create a character, customize him (or her), and interact with NPCs from throughout the Layton saga in an expansive RPG reminiscent of Animal Crossing. Most of the gameplay revolves around simple fetch quests, but it contains a ton of relaxing content that will keep you occupied for weeks even after you've unraveled the mystery of the specter and uncovered all of Misthallery's secrets. Layton's London Life probably isn't deep enough to turn any series nonbelievers into fans, but when added to the winning formula of puzzles and exploration, it helps cement Professor Layton and the Last Specter as another fine entry in the franchise. **—CHRIS H.**





Chelmey

Harrumph! I'm Inspector Chelmey of Scotland Yard.

WRITERS' BLOCK

WHAT VIDEO GAME CHARACTER WOULD YOU DRESS UP AS FOR HALLOWEEN?

JUSTIN CHENG

Tofu from Resident Evil 2. I just need a big cardboard box and some white paint, and my costume is complete.

CHRIS HOFFMAN

Probably either Dr. Light from Mega Man or Dr. Robotnik from Sonic the Hedgehog. That way I wouldn't need to shave off all of my facial hair.

CODY MARTIN

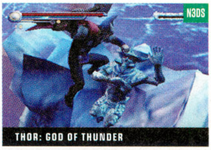
I think this Halloween I'll dress up as the kid from Paperboy and ride around on a bike. Instead of newspapers, I'll throw Nintendo Power magazines!

CHRIS SLATE

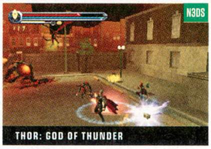
I'd pick a costume that takes real guts to wear: Tingle's. I'd tie a bunch of helium balloons to my belt and float over the town shouting "Tingle, Tingle! Kooloo-Limpah!" while tossing candy down to the children. Then, as they cheered and waved up at me, I'd fly off into the night sky, never to return.

STEVE THOMASON

I'm going to choose Henry Hatsworth, mostly because it gives me an excuse to grow a mustache, wear a monocle, and speak in a British accent—all things I've wanted to do anyway.



THOR: GOD OF THUNDER



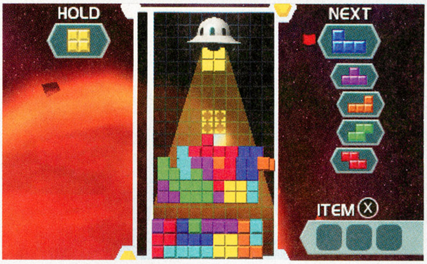
THOR: GOD OF THUNDER

THOR: GOD OF THUNDER

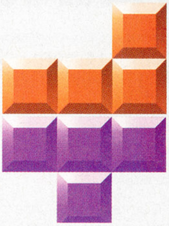
RATING: 6.0

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO 3DS**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **RED FLY STUDIO**
ESRB: **TEEN**

It's been four months since the Wii and DS releases of Thor: God of Thunder, and we have to wonder why this is being released. Anyone who might have had any interest in this title—a port of the Wii game we awarded a 5.5 back in Vol. 267—has most likely already given it a shot and has experienced the repetitive gameplay and the less-than-compelling plot and story presentation. Still, the transition to the stereoscopic handheld does have its benefits—not so much the decent 3D effect, but the controls. One major annoyance of the Wii version was that the Wii Remote controller would sometimes fail to register your intended gestures. Motion controls were essential for knocking opponents into the air, using Storm Powers, and executing quick-time events. In this edition, however, you can perform these maneuvers via holding X, tapping an icon on the touch screen, and pressing the appropriate direction on the Control Pad, respectively. With this restructured control scheme, a lot of the frustration is alleviated. That gives this N3DS edition the edge over its Wii sibling, but it's ultimately a case of too little too late. —**JUSTIN C.**



As Blocky as Ever



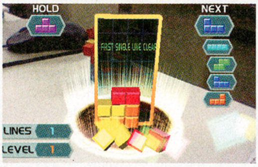
TETRIS AXIS

RATING: 7.5

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO 3DS**
PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**
DEVELOPER: **HUDSON**
ESRB: **EVERYONE**

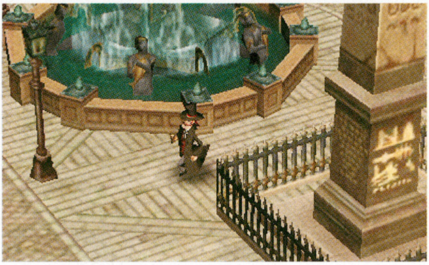
As far as bringing a solid Tetris experience to the Nintendo 3DS system, Tetris Axis is a success. The familiar block-positioning, line-clearing Tetris gameplay remains as fun as ever. And Tetris Axis adds a fun new game type called Fever mode, wherein you play on a narrow matrix and try to clear as many lines as possible within 60 seconds.

But when a Tetris title such as this one follows my favorite entry in the series—Tetris DS—it's hard not to feel just a smidgen of disappointment. It's mainly because of the wonderful Nintendo-ness that saturated Tetris DS compared to the generic space/techno motif of Tetris Axis. Sure, you can face a series of 10 Bombermen (this was developed by the now-defunct Hudson, after all) in the Computer Battle mode, but that's not quite the same as having stages themed after Super Mario Bros. or Metroid.



Nonetheless, as I mentioned earlier, Tetris Axis nails the gameplay. The four Featured modes—Marathon, Computer Battle, Fever, and Survival—are good fun. In fact, I had more fun with these than the nine Party modes—Stage Racer Plus, Shadow Wide, Jigsaw, Tower Climber, Capture, Fit, Bombliss, Sprint, and Master Mode—but I think that has more to do with my fondness for classic Tetris than with the quality of the Party content. I wish the two augmented-reality modes were more enjoyable, but they are still worth checking out, if only for the novelty factor. And as Tetris fans would expect, the game sports several multiplayer modes.

With so many versions of Tetris already on the market, it's hard to say that Tetris Axis is a must-buy. Still, this *is* Tetris, one of the best puzzle games ever, so you'll definitely get your money's worth if you do take the plunge. —**JUSTIN C.**



Flawed Findings

DOCTOR LAUTREC AND THE FORGOTTEN KNIGHTS

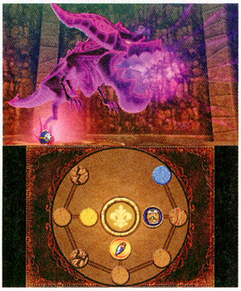
RATING: 6.5

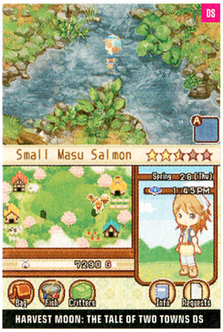
PLATFORM: **NINTENDO 3DS**
PUBLISHER: **KONAMI**
DEVELOPER: **WINKYSOFT**
ESRB: **EVERYONE 10+**

The best word to describe Doctor Lautrec and the Forgotten Knights is probably "uneven." There's certainly a lot to like about the game. It boasts surprisingly high production values, with attractive anime-style cinematics, copious amounts of top-notch voice acting, a fantastic soundtrack, and superb implementation of stereoscopic 3D. The story is filled with intrigue and features a compelling cast of characters. Lautrec himself is sort of an arrogant jerk, but his demeanor provides an entertaining change of pace from most titles of this ilk. The real star may be the city of Paris, however, which serves as the game's setting. Someone on the development team obviously has a deep interest in the French capital and its history, and you end up learning quite a bit about both throughout the adventure.

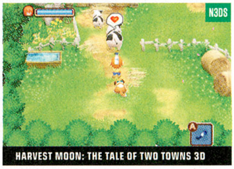
On the other hand, Doctor Lautrec's game mechanics don't fare nearly as well. Though it may look like a Professor Layton clone at first blush, the experience is lot more varied. That does not, unfortunately, equate to more fun. The good doctor spends much of his time sneaking through caverns, for example, and the stealth gameplay involved is slow-paced and boring. There are puzzles to be solved, but instead of meeting Layton's clever logic challenges, you're simply asked to arrange blocks into certain shapes or spot the differences between photos. The turn-based battle system—in which you pit your collection of possessed treasures against enemy spirits—is sort of interesting, but not enough to make up for the title's shortcomings.

That said, it does feel like Konami could be onto something here. We'd love to see the developers give it another crack if they can find a way to make the game itself as enjoyable as its accoutrements. —**STEVE T.**

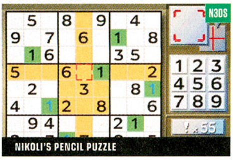




HARVEST MOON: THE TALE OF TWO TOWNS DS



HARVEST MOON: THE TALE OF TWO TOWNS 3D



NIKOLI'S PENCIL PUZZLE

HARVEST MOON: THE TALE OF TWO TOWNS DS

RATING: 8.0

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO DS**
PUBLISHER: **NATSUME**
DEVELOPER: **MARVELOUS ENTERTAINMENT**
ESRB: **EVERYONE**

In an effort to shake up the franchise, this new Harvest Moon installment tasks you with mending a broken relationship between two rival towns by engaging in culinary combat. Despite a bigger emphasis on competitive cooking and working to bring the game's two distinct settlements together, all the usual addictive farming, gardening, animal-rearing, and domicile-building accoutrements remain intact. New tasks, such as bug-collecting and hand-fishing, as well as dynamic quests, are among the other fun updates that keep the familiar gameplay interesting. There are also regular opportunities to relocate from one to the other of the dueling settlements, and each has its own cool vibe. There's definitely enough fresh ground in The Tale of Two Towns to entice series fans back for more agricultural adventure. —**NATHAN M.**

HARVEST MOON: THE TALE OF TWO TOWNS 3D

RATING: 7.5

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO 3DS**
PUBLISHER: **NATSUME**
DEVELOPER: **MARVELOUS ENTERTAINMENT**
ESRB: **EVERYONE**

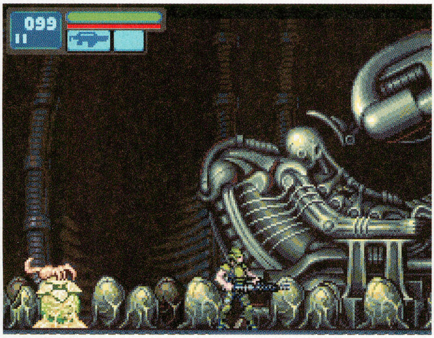
The Nintendo 3DS version of Natsume's latest farming RPG isn't a major step up from the Nintendo DS release—in fact, they're essentially the same. Although the graphics are higher-resolution and in widescreen on N3DS, the stereoscopic 3D effect is subtle and was clearly added just because it had to be. That said, the underlying game is still a very enjoyable—but safe—reformulation of the series. This time around, you're able to choose from two rival towns to call home as you work to reunite their citizens through cooking and farming challenges. There's also a varied quest system along with insect-collecting, hand-fishing, and other activities that will keep things interesting for series vets and newcomers alike. —**RANDY N.**

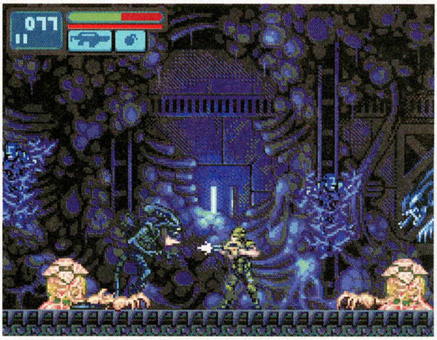
NIKOLI'S PENCIL PUZZLE

RATING: 6.0

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO 3DS**
PUBLISHER: **KONAMI**
DEVELOPER: **HUDSON**
ESRB: **EVERYONE**

Containing 600 grid-and-number-based challenges of varying difficulty, Nikoli's Pencil Puzzle offers not only sudoku but also shikaku (in which you fit together boxes of specific sizes), akari (in which you place light bulbs to illuminate the grid), and hashi (in which you connect circles via a specified number of lines). The gameplay is solid—it features some nice options and delivers on its promise of simple cerebral diversions—but the presentation is pretty darn dull. Despite being on powerful hardware, the game has no visual pizzazz to keep things interesting, and the 3D effects are completely wasted. Also, it's annoying that you're forced to scroll the play field when tackling the more-difficult puzzles. —**CHRIS H.**





Another Glorious Day in the Corps

ALIENS: INFESTATION

RATING: 8.0

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO DS**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **WAYFORWARD**
ESRB: **TEEN**

Someone took the time to write a song that plays over the credits to Aliens: Infestation. It's a song about *Aliens*. A power ballad, even. You get the feeling that more than just a workmanlike level of care went into this project.

Infestation is a pretty decent game by itself, and as a treatment of the film franchise it's even better. It's not just another game of wander-around-and-shoot-things where the things in question happen to be aliens with a capital *A*. It takes ideas from the *Alien* pictures and turns them into stuff that's fun to play with. More movie games ought to work this way.

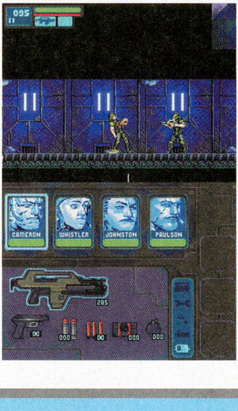
Metroid and Castlevania provide the template: a collection of free-roaming areas to explore and wipe clean of bad guys. The better Castlevanias are bigger and more complex, but there's certainly enough elbow room here to make for an interesting journey. All the familiar sights look great—the *USS Sulaco*, the Hadley's Hope colony, the crashed ship and egg silo from the original *Alien*—and the game slips in enough new ideas (and new alien monsters) to keep us guessing.

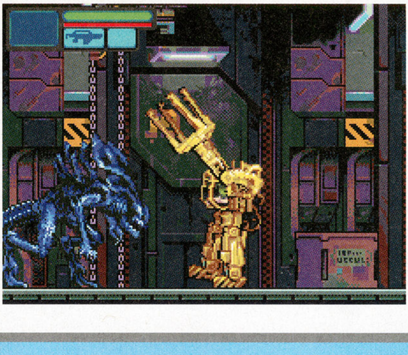
Each member of the player's four-man Marine fire team is a "life" in the standard gaming sense. When they die, they usually die for good, and new recruits replace them in key spots around the game world. Somebody clearly had some fun coming up with character concepts. Besides the usual hard-bitten tough guys, there are charmers like PFC Chau, a wannabe hacker who speaks in 4chan memes.

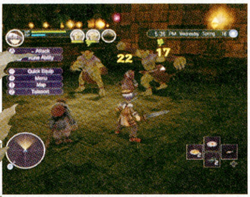
The Marines have all the gadgets they were packing in the movies, neatly adapted to a side-scrolling shooter. The motion tracker is especially well done, lighting up the map with the location of hidden targets and pulsing a familiar tone to ratchet up suspense. In general, the sound-effects integration is great. All the screams and gunfire sound like they did in the theater, and you hear them in all the right places.

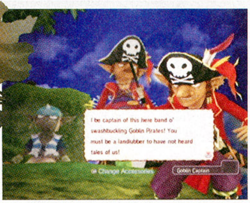
Infestation has its weak points, though. A zero-G platform sequence is a great idea in theory but turns out not to work well at all; the floaty physics are murder to control, and making long-distance jumps calls for leaping off the edge of the screen toward invisible targets. The boss battles look good—big, scary, slimy—but they put up the wrong kind of challenge. They tend to be tests of brute endurance more than quick reflexes or problem-solving. Those bosses poke at one of the game's other sore points. It's possible, indirectly, to save yourself into a corner—save in the wrong spot with too few "extra lives," and the next boss could be almost unbeatable. There's no second saved-game slot for a fallback, either.

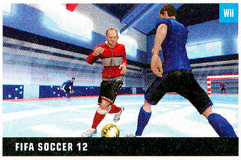
WayForward hasn't worked much in this genre before, so it's no shock to see a couple of glitches in the design. If the developer tries another open-world adventure, though, look out. And if it happens to have aliens in it, so much the better—WayForward has that part down to a science. **—DAVID S.**



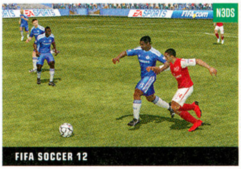




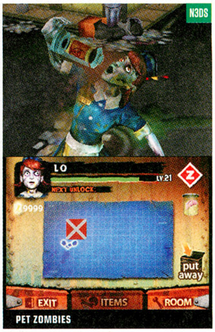

I be captain of this here band o' swashbuckling Goblin Pirates! You must be a landlubber to have not heard tales of us!



FIFA SOCCER 12



FIFA SOCCER 12



PET ZOMBIES

Monster Farmer

RUNE FACTORY: TIDES OF DESTINY

RATING: 8.0

PLATFORM: **Wii**
PUBLISHER: **NATSUME**
DEVELOPER: **NEVERLAND**
ESRB: **EVERYONE 10+**

Natsume's Harvest Moon series made us believe that a farming RPG could actually be great. Rune Factory Frontier took the franchise into the fantasy-adventure RPG realm with equally impressive results. Now comes Frontier's sequel, Rune Factory: Tides of Destiny, another great melding of action-RPG and farming sim with plenty of new touches to enjoy.

The central premise remains unaltered: you spend part of the game fighting monsters in real-time combat and the other part exploring, interacting with other characters, and harvesting crops. This time, though, your character can be either male or female (both are able to marry villagers and have kids) and you have a new helper: a giant golem named Ymir.

While riding on Ymir's shoulders you're able to explore the oceans that cover the game's world, discovering underwater islands and raising them to the surface. On them are monsters to battle and tame. These beasts each possess the ability to grow different crops in your garden, so collecting them is a vital part of the game strategy. Another is using loot you've acquired to craft new weapons and armor, the selection of which is expansive.

Rune Factory: Tides of Destiny is good-looking and vibrant, with interesting characters, a compelling plot, and voice acting that's pretty solid. Its world is one that is easy to lose countless hours in thanks to the multitude of things to do, and the game's numerous tweaks to its predecessor's formula should delight returning fans. —**RANDY N.**

FIFA SOCCER 12

RATING: 8.0

PLATFORM: **Wii**
PUBLISHER: **EA SPORTS**
DEVELOPER: **EA CANADA**
ESRB: **EVERYONE**

For my money, last year's FIFA was one of the best in the series up to that point, mainly because it introduced the five-on-five street-soccer mode, which made for a much more accessible experience. I'm happy to see this mode return in FIFA Soccer 12; I'm even happier to see that EA Canada introduced a new feature—FIFA City—that compelled me to play this edition of FIFA more than any previous iteration. The game is packed with little goals, and as you achieve them your city flourishes and levels up. Leveling up grants you access to the new Intercity Cup, a tournament in which you try to prove your city's supremacy over the surrounding computer-controlled cities. —**JUSTIN C.**

FIFA SOCCER 12

RATING: 7.0

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO 3DS**
PUBLISHER: **EA SPORTS**
DEVELOPER: **EA CANADA**
ESRB: **EVERYONE**

It's great that the Nintendo 3DS version of FIFA Soccer 12 has most of the features of its Wii sibling. (Sadly, though, FIFA City is not included in this game.) The fact that you can create a player in Be a Pro mode, manage a team in the Career mode, or play a five-on-five game of street soccer while you're on the go is pretty awesome. The touch-screen gameplay...not so much. It sounds good, but tapping on the touch screen to place your shots is distracting, as you have to shift your focus from the action on the top screen to the goal on the bottom screen. Fortunately, you can skip the touch-screen stuff and just use traditional buttons. —**JUSTIN C.**

PET ZOMBIES

RATING: 5.5

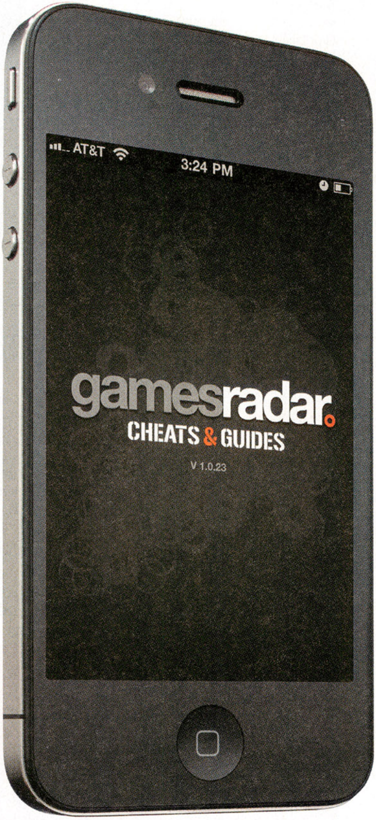
PLATFORM: **NINTENDO 3DS**
PUBLISHER: **MAJESCO**
DEVELOPER: **1ST PLAYABLE PRODUCTIONS**
ESRB: **TEEN**

Who knew that having a zombie as a pet would be such a chore? After adopting an undead companion, you're given only one toy (a mirror) for it to play with, and one torture device (a torch) for keeping it disciplined. This is fun initially, but unlocking more items means cycling through your limited inventory over and over again, so these activities quickly lose their luster. Furthermore, you're required to play the same minigames (there are five in all) repeatedly to earn money in order to actually purchase the items. The game's tendency to refer to the quasi-legality of zombie pets is hilarious, though. And that's the thing—Pet Zombies is an amusing idea. Monotonous gameplay, however, is not. —**CODY M.**

"★★★★★"

Amazing app, and it's FREE!

by Vitsnuklz



"★★★★★ THE BEST GUIDES on the internet… ALL IN ONE PLACE"
by Samael76

"★★★★★ Thank you GamesRadar for FEEDING MY ADDICTION"
by Poconoscott

"★★★★★ GamesRadar is FULL OF WIN"
by Marcello Almaguer

"★★★★★ AWESOMESAUCE! Great app. I love!"
by June Martin

Think guidebooks are too heavy? Is your computer too far away from your console? Do you hate standing up? If so, download our gift to couch potatoes!

gamesradar www.gamesradar.com

www.futureus.com Future MEDIA WITH PASSION

REVIEWS ARCHIVE

THE COMPLETE LIST OF NINTENDO POWER REVIEWS FROM THE PAST YEAR

SCORES REFLECT INDIVIDUAL REVIEWERS' OPINIONS

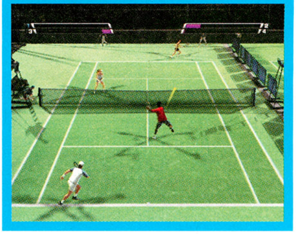
Wii

TITLE	SCORE	PUBLISHER	VOL.	ESRB
Batman: The Brave and the Bold: The Video Game	7.0	Warner Bros.	260	E10+
Bit.Trip Complete	9.0	Aksys	271	E
Captain America: Super Soldier	5.5	Sega	270	T
Cars 2: The Video Game	7.0	Disney	269	E10+
Conduit 2	7.5	Sega	266	T
Create	5.0	Electronic Arts	262	E
de Blob 2	8.0	THQ	265	E
Deca Sports 3	4.5	Hudson	261	E
Despicable Me: The Game	4.0	D3Publisher	258	E10+
DJ Hero 2	9.0	Activision	262	T
Donkey Kong Country Returns	8.5	Nintendo	262	E
Driver San Francisco	4.5	Ubisoft	271	T
Epic Mickey	8.5	Disney	263	E
FIFA Soccer 11	8.0	Electronic Arts	260	E
FlingSmash	7.5	Nintendo	261	E
Flip's Twisted World	6.0	Majesco	260	E
GoldenEye 007	8.5	Activision	262	T
Green Lantern: Rise of the Manhunters	4.0	Warner Bros.	270	E10+
Guilty Party	7.0	Disney	259	E
Guitar Hero: Warriors of Rock	8.0	MTV	261	T
Gunblade NY & LA Machineguns Arcade Hits Pack	5.5	Sega	259	T
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows—Part 1	4.0	Electronic Arts	262	T
Ivy the Kiwi?	7.5	XSEED	259	E
Kirby's Epic Yarn	8.5	Nintendo	261	E
Kung Fu Panda 2	2.5	THQ	268	E10+
The Last Airbender	6.0	THQ	257	T
LEGO Harry Potter: Years 1-4	7.5	Warner Bros.	257	E10+
LEGO Pirates of the Caribbean: The Video Game	7.0	Disney	268	E10+
LEGO Star Wars III: The Clone Wars	8.0	LucasArts	266	E10+
Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga'Hoole	4.5	Warner Bros.	260	E10+
The Lord of the Rings: Aragorn's Quest	5.5	Warner Bros.	260	T
Lost In Shadow	8.0	Hudson	263	E10+
Madden NFL 11	8.5	Electronic Arts	258	E
Madden NFL 12	7.0	Electronic Arts	271	E
Mario Sports Mix	8.0	Nintendo	264	E
Metroid: Other M	8.5	Nintendo	259	T
Michael Jackson: The Experience	6.5	Ubisoft	262	E10+
MySims Skyheroes	7.5	Electronic Arts	260	E10+
Mystery Case Files: The Malgrave Incident	6.0	Nintendo	269	E
Namco Museum Megamix	5.0	Namco Bandai	261	E
Naruto Shippuden: Dragon Blade Chronicles	4.5	Tomy	262	E10+
NASCAR 2011: The Game	3.0	Activision	269	E
NBA 2K11	6.5	2K Sports	261	E
NBA Jam	9.0	Electronic Arts	260	E
NHL Slapshot	6.0	Electronic Arts	259	E
Pac-Man Party	4.5	Namco Bandai	262	E10+
PokéPark Wii: Pikachu's Adventure	7.5	Nintendo	261	E
Rango	5.0	Paramount	266	E10+
Raving Rabbids Travel In Time	6.5	Ubisoft	262	E10+
Rio	4.0	THQ	267	E
Rock Band 3	9.0	MTV	261	T
Samurai Warriors 3	6.0	Nintendo	260	T
Sengoku Basara: Samurai Heroes	7.0	Capcom	261	T
Sid Meier's Pirates!	8.5	2K Games	260	E10+
Sin and Punishment: Star Successor	9.0	Nintendo	257	T
Sonic Colors	9.0	Sega	261	E
Spider-Man: Shattered Dimensions	8.0	Activision	260	T
SpongeBob SquigglePants	7.0	THQ	266	E
Star Wars: The Force Unleashed II	8.0	LucasArts	261	T
Super Mario All-Stars	9.0	Nintendo	263	E
Swords	5.0	Majesco	260	T
Thor: God of Thunder	5.5	Sega	267	T
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 12: The Masters	8.5	Electronic Arts	266	E
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon	6.0	Ubisoft	262	T
Top Spin 4	7.0	2K Sports	266	E
Tournament of Legends	7.0	Sega	257	T
Toy Story 3: The Video Game	7.5	Disney	257	E10+
Transformers: Cybertron Adventures	5.0	Activision	258	T
Transformers: Dark of the Moon—Stealth Force Edition	3.0	Activision	270	E10+
TRON: Evolution—Battle Grids	6.5	Disney	263	E10+
Virtua Tennis 4	8.0	Sega	267	E
Wii Party	7.5	Nintendo	260	E
Wii Play: Motion	7.5	Nintendo	268	E10+
Worms: Battle Islands	7.0	THQ	264	E10+
WWE All Stars	6.5	THQ	266	T
WWE SmackDown vs. Raw 2011	7.5	THQ	262	T

MORE ON:

VIRTUA TENNIS 4

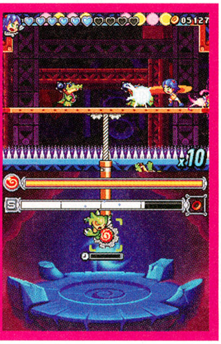
Virtua Tennis 4 has just about everything you'd want in a tennis title—fluid play mechanics, fantastic multiplayer, and good graphics. Plus, the game is easy to pick up and play (disregarding some pretty brutal opponent AI). The NES control style makes for precise gameplay, but I found the Control Pad to be a bit too stiff for my liking; I really wish this game supported the Classic Controller or the Nunchuk controller. —CODY M.



MORE ON:

MONSTER TALE

As was mentioned in the review, Monster Tale relies a bit too much on backtracking for its own good. But other than that, this is an excellent game. Ellie acquires loads of cool moves that are an absolute joy to execute (gotta love juggling those bad guys!), and leveling up Chomp to evolve and learn new moves can easily become an obsession. —CHRIS H.



Nintendo DS

TITLE	SCORE	PUBLISHER	VOL.	ESRB
Atari's Greatest Hits Vol. 1	5.0	Atari	261	E
ATV Wild Ride	7.0	Destineer	264	E
Camping Mama: Outdoor Adventures	5.0	Majesco	271	E
Captain America: Super Soldier	3.5	Sega	270	E10+
Crafting Mama	7.0	Majesco	261	E
de Blob 2	8.0	THQ	265	E
Despicable Me: The Game–Minion Mayhem	7.0	D3Publisher	258	E
Dragon Quest VI: Realms of Revelation	7.5	Nintendo	265	T
Dragon Quest IX: Sentinels of the Starry Skies	9.0	Nintendo	257	E10+
Dragon Quest Monsters: Joker 2	7.5	Nintendo	271	E
Etrian Odyssey III: The Drowned City	8.5	Altus	260	E10+
Final Fantasy: The 4 Heroes of Light	8.0	Square Enix	260	E10+
Ghost Trick: Phantom Detective	9.0	Capcom	263	T
Giana Sisters DS	9.0	Destineer	265	E
Golden Sun: Dark Dawn	8.0	Nintendo	262	E10+
Green Lantern: Rise of the Manhunters	3.5	Warner Bros.	270	E10+
Harvest Moon: Grand Bazaar	6.0	Natsume	258	E
Ivy the Kiwi?	7.0	XSEED	259	E
Kingdom Hearts Re:coded	8.0	Square Enix	263	E10+
Kirby Mass Attack	8.0	Nintendo	271	E
Kung Fu Panda 2	4.5	THQ	268	E10+
The Last Airbender	7.5	THQ	257	E10+
LEGO Battles: Ninjago	7.5	Warner Bros.	267	E
LEGO Star Wars III: The Clone Wars	8.0	LucasArts	266	E
Lufia : Curse of the Sinistrals	8.0	Natsume	260	E10+
Mario vs. Donkey Kong: Mini-Land Mayhem!	7.5	Nintendo	262	E
Monster Tale	8.0	Majesco	265	E
Naruto Shippuden: Naruto vs. Sasuke	5.0	Tomy	262	E10+
Naruto Shippuden: Shinobi Rumble	6.0	Tomy	264	T
Nine Hours, Nine Persons, Nine Doors	9.0	Aksys	262	M
Okamiden	8.0	Capcom	265	E10+
Plants vs. Zombies	9.0	PopCap	264	E10+
Pokémon Black and Pokémon White Versions	9.0	Nintendo	265	E
Pokémon Ranger: Guardian Signs	7.0	Nintendo	260	E
Professor Layton and the Unwound Future	9.0	Nintendo	260	E10+
Puzzle Quest 2	7.5	D3Publisher	257	E10+
Radiant Historia	8.5	Atlus	265	E10+
Rango	7.0	Paramount	266	E
Rio	5.5	THQ	267	E
River City Super Sports Challenge	6.0	Aksys	258	T
Rune Factory 3: A Fantasy Harvest Moon	8.5	Natsume	262	E
Solatorobo: Red the Hunter	9.0	Xseed	271	E10+
Sonic Colors	7.5	Sega	261	E
Spider-Man: Shattered Dimensions	7.0	Activision	260	E10+
Super Scribblenauts	8.5	Warner Bros.	261	E
Thor: God of Thunder	6.0	Sega	267	E10+
Transformers: Dark of the Moon–Autobots/Decepticons	3.0	Activision	270	E10+
Transformers: War for Cybertron	7.0	Activision	258	E10+
TRON: Evolution	6.5	Disney	263	E10+

MORE ON:

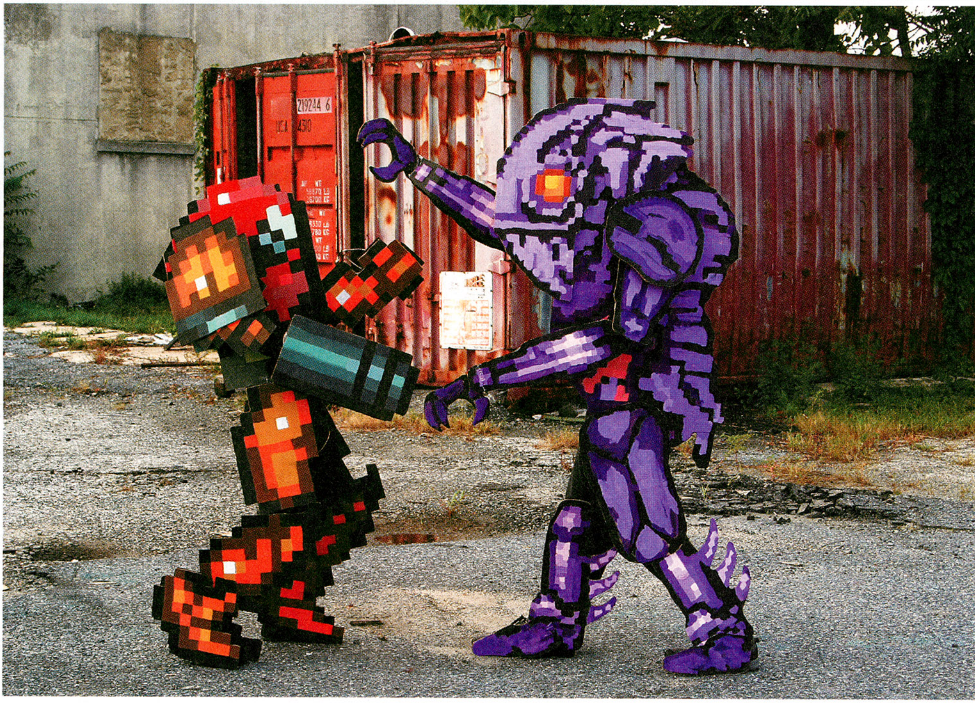
STAR FOX 64 3D

I don't love *everything* about this game—the added tilt control is a hindrance, and I'm not big on the multiplayer mode since so much time is spent trying to acquire a target (the same goes for the rare free-flight levels in the single-player game). But the core rail-shooter experience of Star Fox 64 3D can't be beat for top-notch, old-school thrills, and the improved graphics and added 3D effects are stunning. —CHRIS S.

Nintendo 3DS

TITLE	SCORE	PUBLISHER	VOL.	ESRB
Asphalt 3D	6.0	Ubisoft	266	E10+
Bit.Trip Saga	8.0	Aksys	271	E
BlazBlue: Continuum Shift II	8.5	Aksys	268	T
Cartoon Network Punch Time Explosion	7.0	Crave	267	E10+
Cubic Ninja	4.0	Ubisoft	268	E
Dead or Alive Dimensions	9.0	Tecmo Koei	267	T
Deca Sports Extreme	5.0	Konami	271	E
Driver Renegade	3.0	Ubisoft	271	M
Dual Pen Sports	7.0	Namco Bandai	270	E10+
Face Racers: Photo Finish	4.0	Majesco	271	E
Frogger 3D	6.5	Konami	271	E
Gabrielle's Ghostly Groove 3D	5.5	Natsume	271	E
Green Lantern: Rise of the Manhunters	4.0	Warner Bros.	270	E10+
The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time 3D	9.5	Nintendo	268	E10+
LEGO Star Wars III: The Clone Wars	8.5	LucasArts	266	E10+
Madden NFL Football	6.0	Electronic Arts	266	E
nintendogs + cats	7.5	Nintendo	266	E
Pac-Man & Galaga Dimensions	7.0	Namco Bandai	269	E10+
Pilotwings Resort	8.0	Nintendo	266	E
Pinball Hall of Fame: The Williams Collection 3D	7.0	Crave	268	E10+
Rabbids Travel in Time 3D	6.5	Ubisoft	267	E
Rayman 3D	8.0	Ubisoft	266	E
Reel Fishing Paradise 3D	6.0	Natsume	269	E
Resident Evil: The Mercenaries 3D	7.5	Capcom	269	M
Ridge Racer 3D	8.0	Namco Bandai	266	E
Samurai Warriors: Chronicles	7.0	Tecmo Koei	266	T
Shin Megami Tensei: Devil Survivor Overclocked	9.0	Atlus	271	T
The Sims 3	7.0	Electronic Arts	266	T
SpongeBob SquigglePants	7.5	THQ	267	E
Star Fox 64 3D	8.0	Nintendo	271	E
Steel Diver	8.0	Nintendo	266	E10+
Super Monkey Ball 3D	7.5	Sega	266	E
Super Street Fighter IV 3D Edition	9.0	Capcom	266	T
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon: Shadow Wars	8.0	Ubisoft	266	T
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell 3D	5.5	Ubisoft	267	T
Transformers: Dark of the Moon–Stealth Force Edition	4.0	Activision	270	E10+

COMMUNITY



COSPLAY

Retro Reality

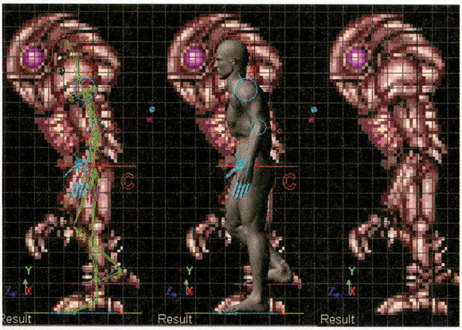
These 2D costumes from Super Metroid are pixel perfection.

MANY OF NINTENDO'S most iconic characters began life as detailed sprites on 2D side-scrolling planes, and although most of those have been reborn as 3D characters over the last 15 years, it's hard to shake the mental image of what these heroes should look like. But when it comes to creating the kinds of fantastic costumes we often feature in this section, cosplayers are frustratingly stymied by the pesky third dimension of reality. Amazingly, that didn't stop longtime reader Daniel Cattell from designing these sharp Super Metroid costumes, which depict Samus Aran and a Torizo boss in all their 16-bit-stylized glory.

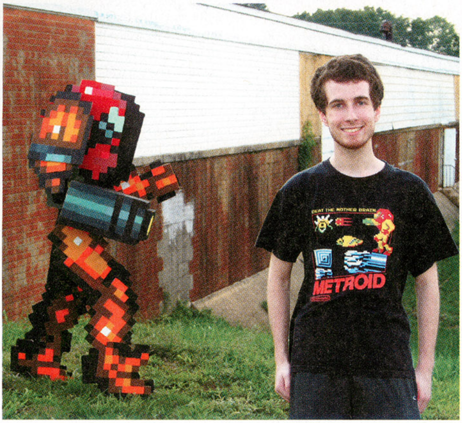
"I wanted to create an effective costume that stood out from others that I had seen, and do it with almost no budget, relying entirely on my creative abilities to make up for it," says the 23-year-old Cattell, who studies animation at Rutgers-Camden University in New Jersey. "As an animator (and a pretty skinny guy), I finally realized that I could make these costumes based on cardboard re-creations of the 2D animated sprites of a game."

Cattell wisely chose the classic Super NES adventure for his project, and while Samus might seem like the obvious initial choice, he actually designed the Torizo costume first. "As a Metroid fan, I was drawn to the Chozo Statues, which had a humanlike form and a distinctive animation and silhouette," he reveals. "I settled on the Torizo boss from Super Metroid as the most visually interesting iteration of the sprite, and stuck with that game for the remainder of this series."

Both were planned using animation software



[Above] Clearly, a lot of thought was put into how a 2D-style Torizo costume would work. [Left and below] These photos by Dawn Herbstsomer Cattell show off the sheer awesomeness of Daniel Cattell's creations.



that let Cattell determine the dimensions as compared to the human models, as well as how large the pixels needed to be on the various cardboard segments. From there, it was simply a matter of measuring and cutting the pieces, painting on the pixels, and then devising ways to fasten them on in a way that allowed some mobility without breaking the sensational illusion.

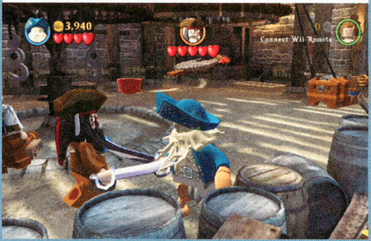
Cattell wore the Torizo costume to the Otakon convention in Baltimore last year, while his friend Krystal Belcher donned the Samus one this year, and both triggered hours of standing in place for photos that have since circulated around the Internet. "The best reactions are the sheer number of people who come up and say that this made their day, considering the price paid for the convention and the other experiences there," he admits. "People that come up to investigate the cardboard structures are occasionally surprised to discover a person inside."

And it won't be the creations' last appearance—Cattell is currently devising a similar costume for the Super Metroid version of Ridley, which he says should appear at next summer's Otakon alongside the existing costumes. But he has another plan for them, as well: "I am considering submitting them as part of my senior thesis," he notes. We'd like to award him an honorary degree in awesomeness. —**ANDREW H.**

WRITE *your own* CAPTION

SCREEN TEST

VOLUME 270'S SHOT



"Jack! I told you I can shave my tentacles myself!" —**AARON M.**

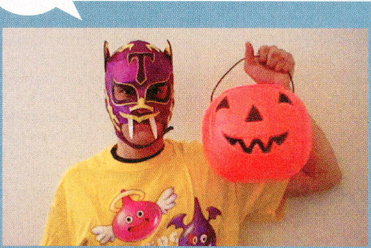
"This is the third time I've lost my sword to an octopus man this week." —**LINKISGREAT**

"Jack Sparrow and Davy Jones had one of the most intense staring/beard/sword contests of all time." —**BRENDAN K.**

TAKE *your best* SHOT

PHOTO CHALLENGE

SEND YOUR PICS TO photos@nintendopower.com.



Use your Nintendo DSi or Nintendo 3DS system to snap a fun, gaming-related photo (like the one above) that matches this month's theme, then transfer the image to a computer using an SD card reader and e-mail it to the above address. We'll print the best ones. **THIS MONTH'S THEME: HALLOWEEN**

READERS UNDER THE AGE OF 18 MUST GET A PARENT'S PERMISSION TO SUBMIT A PHOTO.

ABOVE *and* BEYOND

Got art, cosplay, case mods, etc.? Send them to us via email to **community@nintendopower.com** or via snail mail to Nintendo Power/Community c/o Future US, 4000 Shoreline Court, STE 400, South San Francisco, CA 94080. We'll print the best stuff!

SUBMISSIONS SUBJECT TO PUBLISHER'S PRIVACY POLICY, AVAILABLE THROUGH NINTENDOPOWER.COM.

EVENT

Enforcers Assemble!

A look at the people who keep the Penny Arcade Expo running smoothly

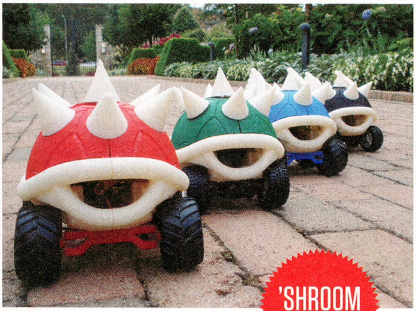
IN ITS SHORT EXISTENCE, Penny Arcade Expo (PAX) has evolved from a loosely organized get-together to one of the biggest gaming conventions in the world. It continues to expand, yet despite its seemingly exponential growth it sells out each year, sometimes months in advance. (Last year it became biannual, with a convention in Boston as well as the one in Seattle.) But have you ever wondered what makes this grassroots gathering of 65,000 gamers tick? The answer is simple: Enforcers. They are the lifeblood of PAX, 600 strong at last count, and growing from year to year. As one Enforcer, Naile, puts it, "There are many of us. We are legion and unstoppable!"

So who are these menacing, blue-shirt-clad guardians roaming the halls of PAX? Well, they're just gamers, actually—like you and me. And more surprisingly, they're volunteers. They come to PAX from all over the place, but rather than simply attend the convention, they choose to sacrifice their time to help out in various ways. They set up the convention hall, manage lines, and attend to the needs of the exhibitors and musicians. They do highly technical work such as lighting and sound at concerts. They manage large-scale productions, usually packed to the brim with attendees. Each Enforcer has a nickname—often the same handle they use on the Penny Arcade forums—and they work tirelessly, selflessly, all weekend long.

Despite their hard work and sleep deprivation, the Enforcer community is a genuinely warm, friendly, even cheery bunch. "There's a tremendous amount of camaraderie," explains Enforcer Kkuz. "It's just a really great group of people to work with." As another, Slifter, puts it, "When you're an Enforcer, you suddenly have 600 new best friends. And they're awesome." And the fellowship doesn't end at PAX. "We're friends all year round, even though there's only two PAXs a year. It's like you have a thousand new friends when you join. It's really cool," says LA, who went on to explain that there are two primary rules that every Enforcer must follow. The first is Wil Wheaton's law, and a phrase Penny Arcade fans are probably familiar with: "Don't be a #$%&." The second rule: "PAX is for the attendees, not for us." LA continues, "As long as you keep those two things in mind, no matter what you do, it works out. Every [Enforcer] sacrifices themselves for PAX."

So why do they do it? What makes someone want to be an Enforcer rather than just attend the show? We asked this question of many Enforcers, and we mostly got the same answer: to make the expo a great experience for everyone. "You're surrounded by people who like the same thing you like," says Chicazul. "Once you feel like you're a part of it, you just want to stay there and make it awesome." Gears agrees: "The attendees of PAX make PAX; they make it worth it," he explains. Another Enforcer, Spydithts, told us, "I attended PAX for three years, and just had a great time. And I figured this time I could work with some of the people who are my friends, and give back for all the time they gave to me the last three years."

We've been to PAX many times, and we're always blown away by how nice and considerate everyone is—from the Enforcers to the attendees to the bands and even the celebrities. As the expo grows, the feeling that you're among friends remains—and a lot of that is due to the environment created by the Enforcers. "All of us pretty much are here because we want to help with the festival that celebrates this thing that we love," states Alcaz. "I think PAX thrives partly because of us, but mostly because there are so many attendees who are all here because they love the same thing we do. This is a really big, hardcore community of people who love games and Penny Arcade. It's hard for things not to go well when you have that big of a community of people who all just love the same thing." —**ANDY M.**



FANDOM

Shell Squad

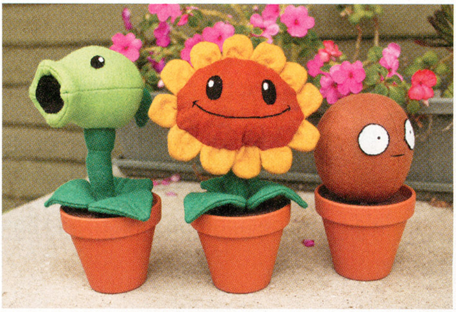
An unemployed architect creates RC shell racers, then lands a sweet job.

WHEN SPEEDING through the Mushroom Kingdom, there's nothing quite so terrifying as seeing a Spiny Shell—especially the dastardly blue one—creeping up on your tailpipe. Now, thanks to one architect's ingenuity and the help of a 3D printer, it's possible to relive that sensation while walking down the sidewalk!

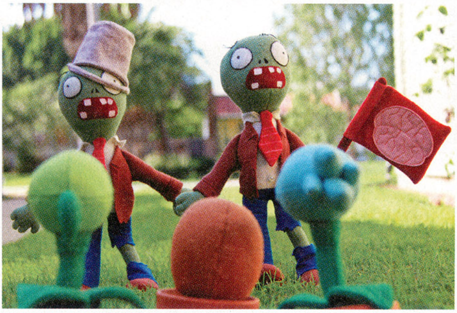
Michael Curry, a 28-year-old architect from Kansas City, Missouri, used to design sports arenas and stadiums, but during a recent period of unemployment, he used a MakerBot 3D printer to dream up these amazing remote-controlled turtle-shell racers inspired by the classic Mario Kart weapons. "The best way to describe [a 3D printer] is as a small factory on your desktop that can create whatever you design in, or download to, your computer," Curry explains.

Each of the turtle shells was built using a handful of parts from a cheap, retail-purchased RC car, but the majority of pieces were designed on Curry's computer and printed out at home. And better yet, he's shared the complete design plans online at www.thingiverse.com/skimbal, so those fortunate enough to have a 3D printer within reach can create their own shell racers.

Curry says the online response has been tremendous since posting the photos and plans for all to see, but the best part of the tale is that he's since been hired as an in-house designer at MakerBot thanks to these colorful creations. "I didn't bring a resume or portfolio—I just brought two of the turtle-shell racers. When asked what I could bring to MakerBot, I put the shells on the table," he notes. "After that, the interview became two shells driving around the room and banging into each other. It was great." *Best interview ever.* —**ANDREW H.**



These zombies may look adorable, but they'll still try to eat your brains.



FANDOM

Plush Plant Power

The war between plants and zombies just got cuter.

AS IF THE RIVALRY between PopCap's loveable garden-dwellers and brain-munching undead weren't adorable enough, video game artist turned hand-crafter Alix Banegas has managed to up the cuteness factor even further with these "Awww"-inspiring Plants vs. Zombies plushes.

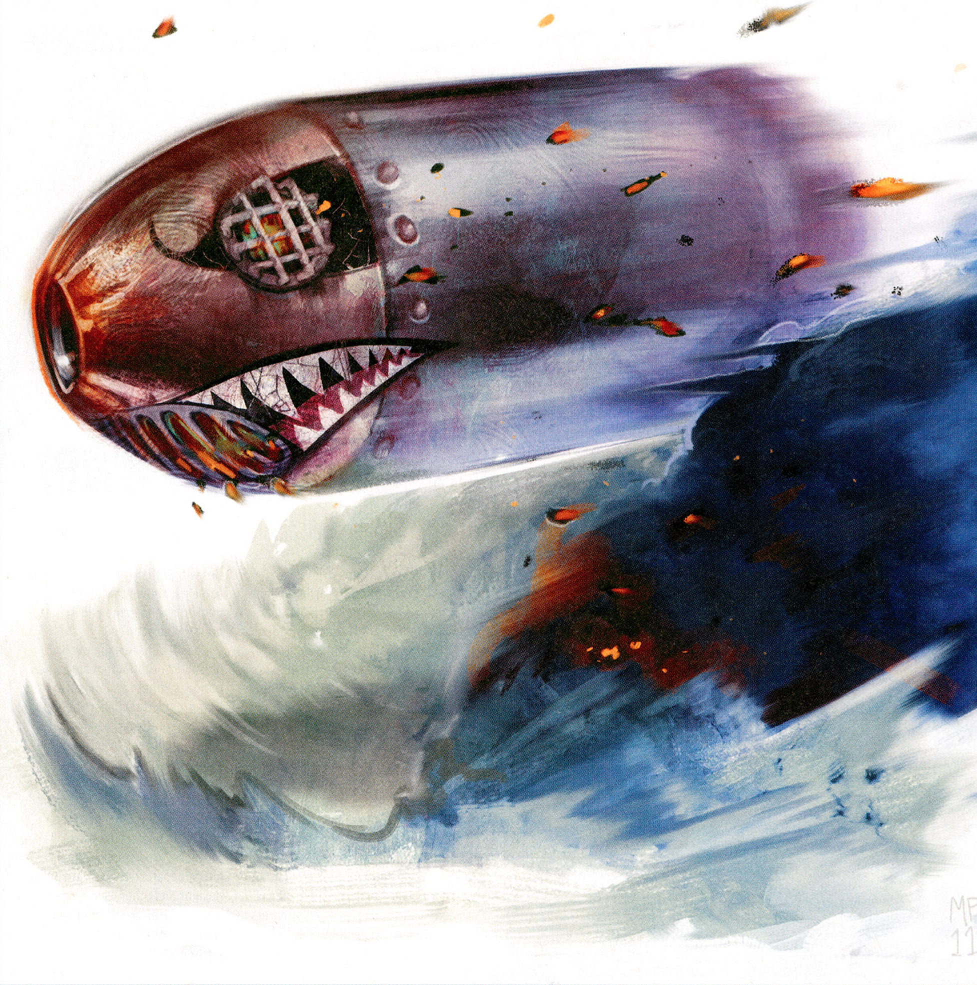
Hailing from a crafty family, the 26-year-old Banegas of San Diego, California, poured her love of making 2D and 3D video game characters into her sewing machine to forge a medley of creatures from the addictive backyard-defense game. "I'm really partial to the simplistic and cartoony types of characters within video games and love to try and capture their personalities within the crafts I make," she explains, adding that she got hooked on the game and its bubbly characters.

The idea for making the first plush PvZ Peashooter came when Banegas stumbled upon an extra flower pot sitting in her shed. Since then, she has re-created 10 different plushes from the game using wool felt, a little paint, some wire, and clay pots. While she loves making the now-iconic PvZ characters, Banegas has moved on to start her own business, Arixystix Creations, and she crafts her own cute plush designs and other clever items that are available through her website, www.arixystix.com. —**NATHAN M.**

FANDOM

Frightening Foes

Mario's enemies become monstrous beasts in these stunning fan sketches.



THE CARTOONLIKE ENEMIES of the Super Mario universe can be challenging and frustrating in equal doses, but while they may impede your path and cause some hard feelings, it's doubtful that many players are truly terrified of those memorable foes. But would that still be the case if these tremendously detailed, fan-reimagined characters were waiting for you on the other side of a green pipe?

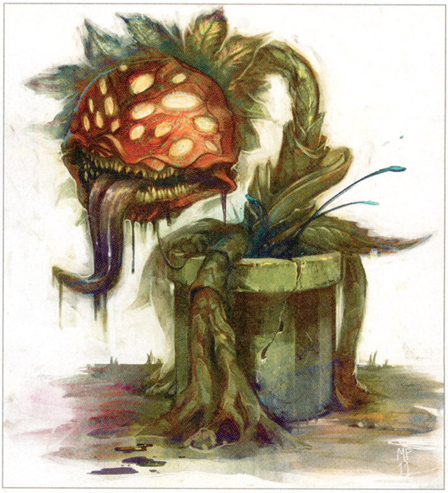
It's fair to say these interpretations of enemies such as the Goomba, Bob-omb, and Lakitu are miles away from the vibrant versions seen in countless games over the years, but that's exactly what makes them so intriguing. Mike Puncekar, a 23-year-old freelance illustrator from northeast Ohio, has been creating and posting his sketches on his blog, mpuncekar.blogspot.com, in recent months, and says the first step in transforming an adorable adversary into a menacing beast is isolating the essential elements of the character.

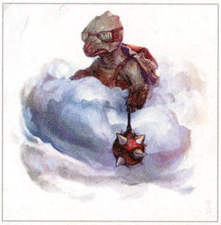
"I really try to pick a few things that make them the character that they are," reveals Puncekar. "For instance, with the Shy Guy I revamped, I could have done anything with the body as long as I kept that iconic mask and hood."

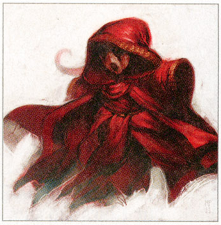
Puncekar's illustrations display myriad steampunk, horror, and fantasy elements, and the lifelong artist—who recently graduated from Columbus College of Art & Design—notes a variety of influences on his work, including comic artists such as Mike Mignola and Ashley Wood, as well as famed authors H.P. Lovecraft and Cormac McCarthy. As a result, he says, "It was only natural to take these cartoony characters and adapt them like I have. It's what I like to do."

Amazingly, each piece is generally created within just two or three hours, with Puncekar composing the artwork digitally using Adobe Photoshop and a Wacom tablet. Starting with a grayscale design, he later adds in and edits the colors—and he sometimes performs the entire task via webcam so fans can view his process. That said, he's making a concerted effort not to futz with the artwork too much and just let each remain a stellar sketch. "I try to just keep 'em quick to make and not get too attached. These really are just for the fun of it," admits Puncekar. "The response I've gotten has only been a much-appreciated bonus."

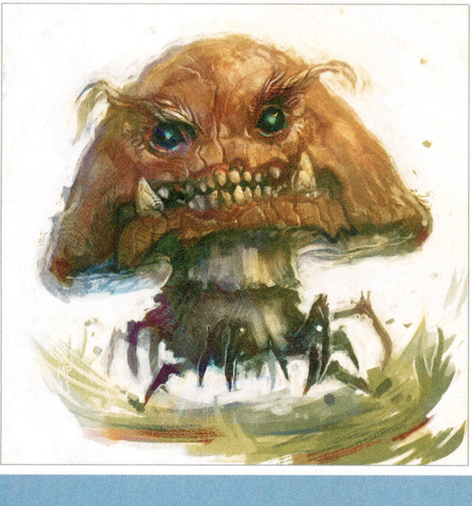
With more than a dozen Mario-enemy redesigns completed and several more planned, we have a feeling the buzz around his work will continue to grow. And Puncekar says he hopes to tackle some Legend of Zelda-related redesigns in the future, which will no doubt summon Hyrule's heartiest fans to appreciate his inventive designs. **—ANDREW H.**

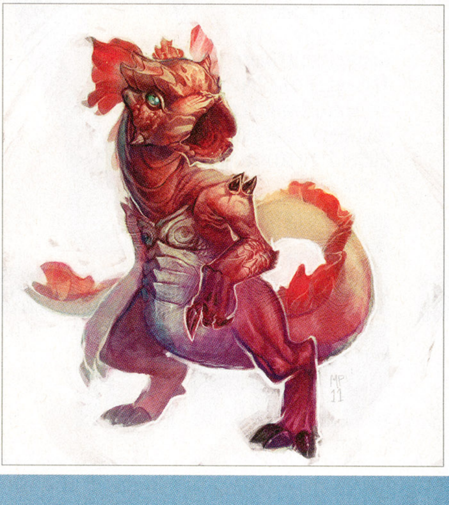


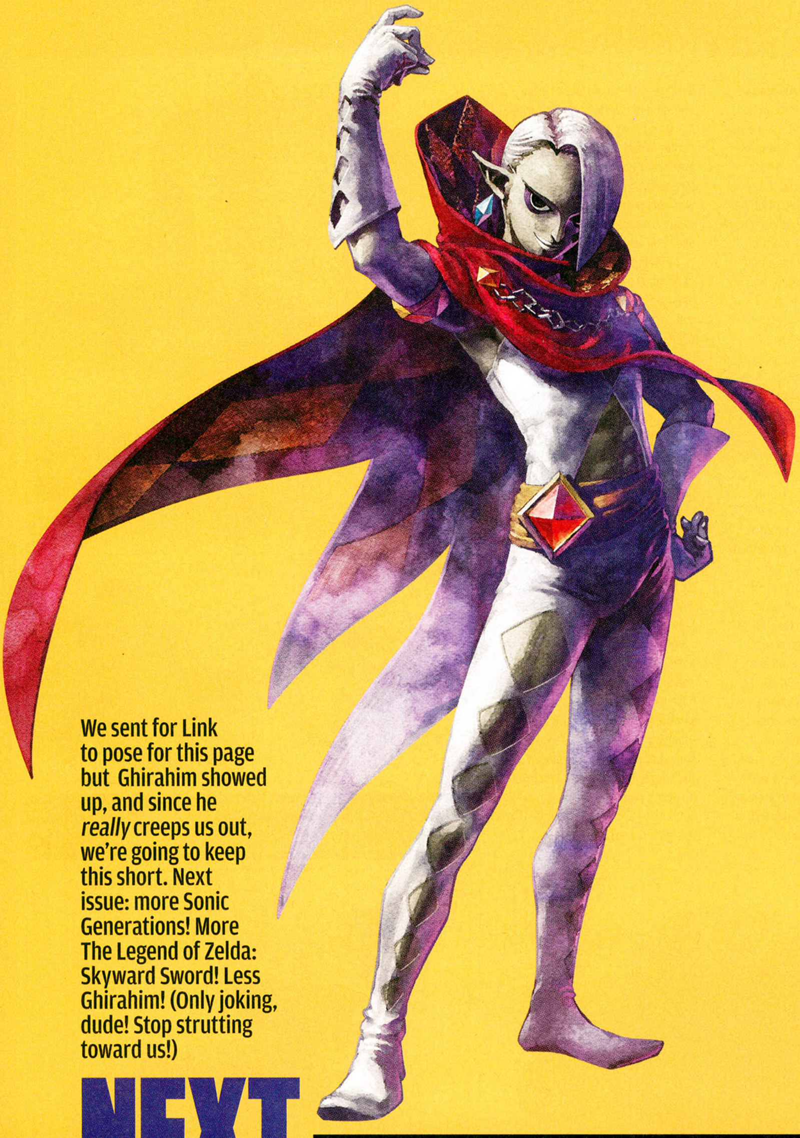




Artist Mike Puncekar took what was once delightful and made them downright demonic. Seriously, these illustrations of iconic Mario baddies are the stuff of nightmares—and that makes them awesome.







We sent for Link to pose for this page but Ghirahim showed up, and since he *really* creeps us out, we're going to keep this short. Next issue: more Sonic Generations! More The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword! Less Ghirahim! (Only joking, dude! Stop strutting toward us!)

NEXT MONTH

NOVEMBER 2011 VOL. 273

NINTENDO POWER (ISSN 1041-9551) is published monthly by Future US, Inc., 4000 Shoreline Court, Suite 400, South San Francisco, CA 94080. Phone: (650) 872-1642. Fax (650) 872-2207. Website: www.futureus.com. Periodicals postage paid in South San Francisco, CA and at additional mailing offices. Newsstand distribution is handled by Time Warner Retail. Subscriptions: One year basic rate (12 issues): US: $19.95. Canada: US$27.95. Canadian orders must be prepaid. Canadian price includes postage and GST (GST #R128220688). PMA #40612608. Subscriptions do not include newsstand specials.

POSTMASTER: Send changes of address to: Nintendo Power, PO Box 5770, Harlan, IA 51593-1270. Standard Mail Enclosure in the following editions: None. Ride-Along Enclosure in the following editions: None. Returns: Pitney Bowes, PO Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2, Canada. Future US, Inc. also publishes @ Gamer, Crochet Today!, Guitar Aficionado, Guitar World, Knitting Today!, Mac|Life, Maximum PC, The Official Xbox Magazine, PlayStation: The Official Magazine, PC Gamer, Revolver, Windows: The Official Magazine, and World of Warcraft Official Magazine. Entire contents copyright 2011, Future US, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited. Future US, Inc. is not affiliated with the companies or products covered in Nintendo Power. Reproduction on the Internet of the articles and pictures in this magazine is illegal without the prior written consent of Nintendo Power. Products named in the pages of Nintendo Power are trademarks of their respective companies. PRODUCED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

SUBSCRIBER CUSTOMER SERVICE: Nintendo Power Customer Care, P.O. Box 5770, Harlan, IA 51593-1270. Online: www.nintendopower.com/customerservice. Phone: 1-866-941-8368. Email NTNcustserv@cdsfulfillment.com.

BACK ISSUES: www.nintendopower.com/shop or by calling 1-800-865-7240.

REPRINTS: Future US, Inc., 4000 Shoreline Court, Suite 400, South San Francisco, CA 94080. Phone: (650) 872-1642. Fax (650) 872-2207. Website: www.futureus.com.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

SONIC 4!
CONDUIT 2
MARIO ROCKS!
SUPER REVIEW!
YEAR OF THE MOUSE!
NINTENDO 3DS
METROID MANIA
GIANT REVIEWS
SONIC COLORS FIRST REVIEW!
GREAT APE!
MARIO SPORTS MIX
ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL!
NINTENDO POWER
25 YEARS OF NES
26-PAGE TRIBUTE
We salute the games, controllers, codes, and even the boxes behind the system that started it all!

THE OFFICIAL NINTENDO MAGAZINE

SAVE 72%*

12 ISSUES FOR $19.95

www.nintendopower.com/replynow

*Subscription offer good in the U.S. only. Newsstand price is U.S. $5.99 per issue.
For more information visit www.nintendopower.com/customerservice

Game trademarks and copyrights are properties of their respective owners.

Nintendo properties are trademarks of Nintendo.

Nintendo Power magazine is published
by Future US, Inc., under official license
from Nintendo of America.
© 2011 Future US, Inc.

STARFOX 64 ™
3D
STARFOX 64
3D
NINTENDO 3DS
EVERYONE 10+
Playable in 2D and 3D. 3D mode for ages 7+. See back.
Nintendo
1st ★×01
NINTENDO 3DS.
~~$249.99~~
$169.99 MSRP*
GAME AND SYSTEM SOLD SEPARATELY.
EVERYONE 10+
E 10+
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Fantasy Violence

Take off on an aerial adventure in Star Fox 64 3D, now with stunning 3D graphics and new gyro-motion controls.

Play as Fox McCloud in Story Mode with Peppy, Slippy and Falco at your side. Or face off against 3 of your friends** in Battle Mode. You can even watch their faces live via the inner camera on your Nintendo 3DS system.

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS TO RESTRICT 3D MODE FOR CHILDREN 6 & UNDER.
*MANUFACTURER'S SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE. ACTUAL PRICE MAY VARY. SEE RETAILER FOR DETAILS.
© 1997 - 2011 NINTENDO. STAR FOX 64 AND NINTENDO 3DS ARE TRADEMARKS OF NINTENDO.
**ADDITIONAL SYSTEMS REQUIRED. SOLD SEPARATELY.

Made with love by

RETROMAGS

Our goal is to preserve classic video game magazines so that they are not lost permanently.

People interested in helping out in any capacity,
please visit us at retromags.com.

No profit is made from these scans, nor do we offer anything available from the publishers themselves.

If you come across anyone selling releases from
this site, please do not support them and do let us know.

Thank you!